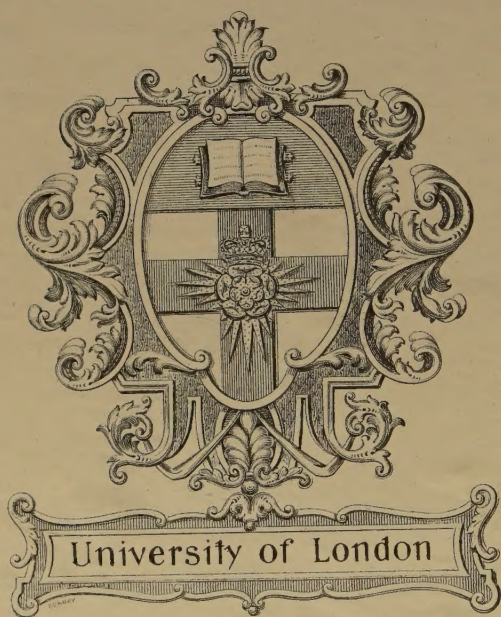


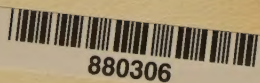
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*Verney Letters of the
Eighteenth Century from
the MSS. at Claydon House*



Sir John Verney, 1st Viscount Fermanagh.

*Verney Letters of the
Eighteenth Century from
the MSS. at Claydon House*

edited by
Margaret Maria Lady Verney
LL.D.

with portraits and pedigrees

vol. i

London
Ernest Benn Ltd.





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PREFACE

THESE extracts from the Verney Letters of the Eighteenth Century are now complete. A friend has pronounced them "fine mixed eating". They explain themselves, and there might seem to be scant need of a Preface; but the Editor has still the pleasant duty of heartily thanking those who have permitted the reproduction of contemporary portraits, which so much enliven the volumes.

It is hoped that these kind benefactors will realise that their pictures gain as much by comparing them with the letters, as these last do by being read with the portraits of the writers.

The reproductions from the collection at Stanford Hall show how much we are indebted to The Lord Braye who represents the Verneys, but whose pedigree is too fully given in every Peerage to need repeating here.

The Lord Bishop of Portsmouth and his brother, Sir Harry Verney Lovett at Oxford, have lent pictures and contributed much valuable and intimate information.

Sir Gerald Stewkley Shuckburgh, Bart., has lent a lovely painting from Shuckburgh.

Mrs. Yates Thompson has allowed the reproduction of a graceful portrait in plaster work from Oving House.

Alfred F. Sotheby, Esq., has lent a print of the Duke of Gloucester.

The Editor of the *Architectural Review* has allowed excellent photographs of the House and Staircase to be used.

Arthur Bryant, Esq., has given much kind help and sympathy.

Miss Kathleen Leahy, M.A., has made researches in Dublin, London and Bangor.

Miss Maud Grenfell has sent dates and a pedigree.

Randall Davies, Esq., has helped about Chelsea.

Henry Higgs, Esq., has given valued advice.

Warm thanks are also due to those kind correspondents who have sent information or unravelled obscure passages.

First, and particularly, to Professor R. B. Mowat, of Bristol University, who has given much valuable time to reading the whole book in proof.

To the Rev. H. E. Blakiston, President of Trinity College, Oxford, who has taken infinite pains to identify some of the characters mentioned in the correspondence.

To Professor Patrick Abercrombie of Liverpool University.

To Professor A. S. Turberville, formerly of University College, Bangor, and now at Leeds.

To Mrs. John Knapp.

To the Rev. P. E. Hawksley.

To W. W. Vaughan, Esq., M.V.O., M.A., F.R.H.S., Headmaster of Rugby.

To several clerical friends who have been kind enough to search old Parish Registers.

And to my secretaries, Miss F. M. Evans and Miss E. Prothero, who have given me ungrudging help and service.

But chiefly am I indebted to two ladies whom Lord Fermanagh would distinguish as "my best towne girle Ellin Salmon, and my best country girle Ruth Florence Verney".

MARGARET M. VERNEY.

CLAYDON HOUSE,
September 1928.

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VERNEYS OF CLAYDON

SIR EDMUND VERNEY = MARGARET DENTON
Kt. Marshal and
Standard Bearer to
Charles I.

Ralph = Mary 1st Bart. Blacknall	Thomas Four other sons deceased	Penelope = Sir John Osborne	Margaret = Sir Thomas <i>d.s.p.</i> Elmes (see vol. i. p. 277)	Cary, Lady (see vol. i. Gardiner p. 277)	Mary = Mr. Robt. Betty = Rev. C. Lloyd (see vol. ii. Adams p. 172)
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Edmund = Mary Abel, heirress of East Claydon	John, 2nd Bart. and 1st Viscount Fermanagh	= (1) Elizabeth Palmer (see vol. ii. p. 108)		= (2) Mary Lawley (see vol. ii. p. 161)	= (3) Elizabeth Baker (see vol. ii. p. 161)	Other children who died young
--	--	--	--	---	--	----------------------------------

Descendants *d.* young

Ralph, 2nd Vis. Fermanagh, and 1st Earl Verney	= Catherine Paschall of Baddow Hall, Essex	Elizabeth <i>d. unm.</i>	Mary = Col. John Lovett (see vol. i. p. 213)	Margaret = Sir Thomas Cave, 3rd Bart. (see vol. i. p. 256)
--	--	-----------------------------	--	---

John = Mary Nicholson	Ralph, 3rd Vis. Fermanagh, and 2nd Earl Verney	= Mary Herring	Elizabeth = Lord Sherard, later Earl of Harborough	Catherine <i>d. unm.</i>
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No children

Mary Verney,
created Baroness Fermanagh,
d. unm.

BOOK I—*Continued*

1696-1717

"More Art, together with more hours of leisure, would have made this a lesser Volume. For in writing of Books, as in carving of Statues, the cutting away of each superfluity is a work of skill and time."—Archbishop TENISON.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE OF BOOK I

SIR JOHN VERNEY, Bart., later VISCOUNT FERMANAGH, Owner of Claydon House, Bucks.

ELIZABETH, LADY VERNEY, later VISCOUNTESS FERMANAGH, *née* Baker, Third Wife of Sir John Verney.

RALPH, ELIZABETH, MARY, and MARGARET VERNEY, Children of Sir John Verney by his First Wife, Elizabeth Palmer.

CATHERINE, Wife of Ralph Verney, *née* Paschall.

THOMAS VERNEY, Uncle to Sir J. V.

CARY, LADY GARDINER, *née* Verney, Aunt of Sir J. V.

JOHN, CARY, PENELOPE, CAROLINA, ISABELLA, and KATHERINE STEWKLEY, Children of Lady G. by her Second Husband.

MARGARET GARDINER, Daughter of Lady G. by her First Husband.

ELIZABETH, MRS. ADAMS, *née* Verney, Aunt of Sir J. V., Widow of Rev. Charles Adams of Great Baddow, Essex.

MARGARET and ISABELLA ADAMS, Daughters of Mrs. Adams.

SIR HUGH STEWKLEY and Daughters.

COLONEL JOHN LOVETT } Sons-in-law of Sir J. V.
SIR THOMAS CAVE, Bart. }

JOHN COLEMAN } Stewards to Sir J. V.
CHARLES CHALLONER }

PALMERS of Little Chelsea, Family of Sir J. V.'s First Wife.

LAWLEYS of Shropshire, Family of Sir J. V.'s Second Wife.

BAKERS of Hatton Garden and of } Family of Sir J. V.'s Third Wife.
Penn, Bucks }

NARCISSUS LUTTRELL, Wife and Son }

REV. WILLIAM VICKERS, Cousin to Sir J. V. by Marriage.

CAPTAIN VERNEY LLOYD } First Cousins to Sir J. V.
MARY and RUTH LLOYD }

Friends, Soldiers, Physicians, Lawyers, Keepers, Gardeners, Servants.

CHAPTER I
A RETROSPECT
1640-1696

SIR RALPH VERNEY was dead.

This was the thought weighing down all hearts, as the company dispersed after his funeral in the fading light of a wet October evening, in the year of grace 1696. The gentry departed in their lumbering coaches through the muddy lanes, the farmers on their heavy horses across the fields, the heir and his children hurried back to their London home. With the death of the old Knight and Baronet a chapter was closed for Claydon and for the county.

Sir Ralph was not a man of commanding ability, but he had played the part of an Englishman honestly and fearlessly in difficult times. He had lived under the four Stuart Kings; he had sat with Eliot and Hampden in the Short and the Long Parliaments; had lost his father in the first battle of the Civil War; had seen the Commonwealth, the Protectorate and the Restoration, and had sat in the Convention Parliament which placed William and Mary on the throne.

Sir Ralph's fidelity to his political and religious principles had made him the centre of the Whig and Protestant interest in the county, and when his housekeeper, Mrs. Lillie, and his faithful servant, Hodges, were clearing up after the guests' departure, they were putting away more than the broken meats of the funeral feast.

The house and the church were both draped in black hangings; the rector, Mr. Butterfield, and his family, were left to share in the grief of the parish; and Mr. Coleman, Sir Ralph's faithful steward and friend, remained in charge till his new master could gather up the reins.

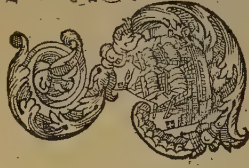
In the larger world outside the prospect was not a bright one. Queen Mary, who had won all hearts, had died of smallpox; and King William, who had not gained in England the gratitude he deserved, was much away in Holland. The Princess Anne and her fragile little son, the Duke of Gloucester, were living in comparative obscurity; there was much distress at home, the air was full of rumours of wars, and the corruption and confusion amongst politicians were notorious.

And now the county neighbours were asking themselves about the character and antecedents of the new Master of Claydon; he himself acknowledged rather sadly that he was a stranger amongst them.

John Verney was born in the Piazza at Covent Garden on November 5, 1640, in the prosperous days of the family. His father and grandfather were both in the House of Commons. Sir Edmund was Knight Marshal to Charles I., and distinguished by the King's favour and friendship. By the time John was three years old the crash had come. Claydon was sequestered and soldiers were quartered in the house; his father and mother had gone into exile, taking their two elder children with them, and little Jack was left in the deserted house for some years to come. Happily, he was too young to be troubled by these things. Instead of the satin and point lace with which the children of Van Dyck's time were adorned, no one had leisure to dress him up or curl his hair. He thoroughly enjoyed his liberty, and went dancing and singing about the long passages and empty rooms, to the great comfort of his hapless young aunts, who were huddled together for safety in their old home. During his mother's rare visits to Claydon, he never quitted her side, and she described him as "very good company and an extream witty child, but he hates his book and learns nothing here".

In his eighth year his mother took him with her to France; and after her lamented death in 1650, he remained at Blois, in the house of the Protestant pastor, while his father and brother Edmund made a grand tour.

His upbringing had thus been as unlike as possible to that of an English boy in his position, but he was a younger son and Sir Ralph never contemplated his succeeding to Claydon. He destined John for the Bar, but England was over-full of lawyers treading on each other's heels: the law was reputed to be the only profession that had gained by the troublous times.



Ath
 Bth
 Wth
 N^o
 C^o
 D^o
 G^o
 H^o
 (C^o)

a short life
 IN two books by John Verney

Hipped by the grace of God in good Order, and well Conditioned by
 me John Verney of London merchant in and upon the good Ship
 called the *Barnardiston*
 whereof is Master under God for this present Voyage *Edw. William*
Co. master and now riding at Anchor in the river of *Thames*
 and by Gods grace bound for *London* to say *Thomas*
cont. Twenty Shillings

2 fishing Boats a Cornill flage *gabriel*

being
 marked and numbered as in the Margin, and are to be delivered in the like
 good Order and well Conditioned at the aforesaid Port of *London*
 (the danger of the Seas only excepted) unto *Walter & Edward* Esq^s

or to his Assigns, he or they paying freight for the said goods
 according to agreement with the *London Company*
 with *Freight* and *Average* accustomed. In witness whereof the Master
 or Purser of the said Ship hath affixed to three Bills of Lading all
 this tenor and date, the one of which three Bills being accomplished, the
 other two to stand void. And so God send the good Ship to her desired
 Port in safety. Amen. Dated in *London* the *17th* day of *June* 1577

John Verney
Master of the Ship

Bill of Lading, by John Verney.

The boy had his own opinions. The country squires were all in financial difficulties, and John felt equal to earning money instead of squandering it, if he were only given the opportunity. After some desultory schooling in London, where Dr. Denton and his family befriended him, he persuaded Sir Ralph to apprentice him to Gabriel Roberts, a native of Beaumaris, Anglesey, settled in London, a man of high character and ability, trading in the Levant Company.

In his twenty-first year John was sufficiently familiar with the silk business to be sent out to the factory at Aleppo, where he remained for twelve years, leading a hard life amid outbreaks of the plague and with varying fortunes. He visited Mesopotamia, Cyprus and Palestine, and returned home in 1674 to take up work in the City and to set up a modest home of his own in London.

In 1680 he acquired the greatest treasure of his life, by wedding Elizabeth, daughter of Ralph Palmer and Alice White of Chelsea. After six years of the happiest married life, his "Dearest Joy" left him a widower with four little children, in 1686. He married for the second time, in 1692, Mary, daughter of Sir Francis and Lady Lawley, and rejoiced in the birth of a son, John; but the child only lived a year, and Mary herself died of smallpox in 1694, aged thirty-three.

During his chequered domestic life John had been the chief stay and helper of his father and his brother Edmund, and when his brother died in 1688, he loyally cared for his two promising young nephews, Ralph and Edmund Verney. It was only on the death of the surviving nephew, in his early manhood, that John's own position and prospects were changed, and he entered in his pocket-book—"At length eldest son & heir male".

For a few more years he was his father's devoted and capable adviser; they were together in town for some months in each season, but he was little at Claydon, Sir Ralph being quite capable of managing his own affairs there, and John had almost reached his fifty-sixth birthday before he became "Sir John Verney, Baronet of Claydon, County Bucks".

CHAPTER II
A NEW MASTER
1696-1697

It was a tribute to his past happiness that Sir John Verney was anxious to enter a third time into the Holy Estate of Matrimony.

His girls, though still talked of as "the children", were fast growing into womanhood, when girls were thought old enough to be married at fifteen and sixteen years of age. At the time of their grandfather's death Elizabeth was fifteen, Mary fourteen, Ralph thirteen, and pretty little Margaret eleven. Their own mother was but a shadowy figure even to the elder ones; they had just become attached to their step-mother when they lost both her and the baby brother who had been so welcomed. Their Verney cousins, Ralph, Edmund and Mary, who had been frequent guests in their home, had all died, and the outward paraphernalia of sorrow, so rigidly enforced in those days, had been constantly familiar to the children.

Their grave and busy father was very fond of them, but his ideas about the education of children were far from cheerful. While his second wife was dying of smallpox, little Ralph, aged eleven, was ill with a fever; and when Mary Verney died, her husband, having made arrangements for her burial at Claydon, wrote thus to his father:

"... In the Coach which will accompany the hearse, I have a mind to send down my son Ralph for 10 or 12 days for change of Aire . . . for though his feaver have left him, yet he goes peaking about and looks but indifferently. . . . I'll send noe body downe with him, if you'll but cause a little bedd to be made for him either in Mr. Hodges' or Mr. Coleman's Chamber; he will be very little Trouble to them, for he can doe all about himselfe without inconveniencing anyone."

"Little Master" was a favourite at Claydon, so his holiday may have been happier than its dismal commencement.

Sir John had many friends in the City and at Chelsea, but nowhere was he more kindly welcomed than at Mr. Daniel Baker's house in Hatton Garden. Alderman Baker was an influential business man and had a landed estate at Penn in Buckinghamshire; he and his wife had a cheerful household of children and grandchildren, and were eminently hospitable. Sarah, the eldest, was married to Narcissus Luttrell the Diarist, and had two boys, Narcissus (born 1657) and Frank (born 1682), and a daughter, Sarah. Daniel, the eldest son, married Martha Mellish; they had a baby almost every year, and the unmarried daughter at Hatton Garden was surrounded by a devoted little flock of nephews and nieces. It was this girl, Elizabeth Baker, who was John's chief crony, and a quiet friendship became a quiet courtship during the last months of Sir Ralph's life, with his cordial approval.

Elizabeth Baker was content that her elderly lover should take his own time. She does not seem to have had the beauty of his child-wife Elizabeth Palmer, or the stately grace of Mary Lawley, but her kindness and good sense inspired confidence, and she was so well educated that the older generation, who were accustomed in their spelling to "flavour to taste", as their cookery books enjoined them, were almost annoyed at her monotonous correctness. Nancy Nicholas (*née* Denton) voiced this feeling in writing to Sir John:

"Pray tell your Good Lady I present my humble servis to her . . . she has so much a beter skill at writing than I have, that she has quit sillensed me unles I have any occation of business."

A modern review of her correspondence hardly justifies this criticism.

In Daniel Baker's home Sir John found a safe refuge from worries, and the worries were not slow in arriving. Every friend he had ever had seemed at that moment in urgent want of money; and relations were discontented with Sir Ralph's will.

Lady Gardiner, after thanking Wm. Coleman, the steward, for his attention to her daughter Cary while she was at Claydon, writes: 14 Jan.
1697.

"I need not tell you how duttiful Carey was to my deare brother . . . & whot return shee has had for her dull and unpleasing Life shee led ther. I am sure you wod A bin glad if your Master had don something for all mine at his death, but I loved him as my Life, as well as ever sister could love A brother, & all mine was bred up to

love him as a Father, & tho' he forgot them at his death, I will never forget to love his memory."

Sir John's old uncle, Tom Verney, followed suit. Tom, who had brought only trouble and discredit to his own generation by his ill-directed talents and shameless begging, was now, like a toothless old lion, out of sight and out of mind. His nephew, who pitied his miserable old age, entrusted Mr. John Deare, a Coroner in South Wales, to dole out Tom's "quarterage" to him in small sums, that he might be saved from his habitual alternations of self-indulgence and penury.

Tom writes:

9 Jan.
1697.

"Sir,—I would willingly know in what condition your late deare Father left mee, for his lifetime he was kind and continued it to his death. Sir, you hint nothing to mee att all about it, which I admire att. I hope you will receive no damadge by it. My eye-sight doth much faile mee, I need not lay open unto you the nakedness of my condition, you must know it too well allready. . . . I both live and write in much pain and misery. God send to yourself and offsprings all joy and content imagineable, soe sayeth and prayeth, Sir, your most affectionate Uncle and humble servant, THOMAS VERNEY."

His nephew replies:

19 Jan.
1697.

". . . As to what you desire of knoweing in what condition my deare father left you: A yeare ago he made his will, but gave no Legacies to any One body excepting his meniall servants. If there were any due you whould certainly not only have heard of it from me, but have had it before now, if any such had been."

22 May
1697.

Even Tom's deserted wife puts in her claim, and begs his charity for "A poor Lane Creature . . . if I could be mistress of so much money as would carry me to the bannio" [bath]. John does his best to satisfy them all; he sends Tom's wife "20 shillings by Mrs. Weston, her Niece, a Manto Maker in Russell Street". Tom acknowledges his "Large and charitable bounty", and assures him in return that ". . . My heart hath swarme of well wishes for you, & the honey you may gather from them is your happiness".

8 Apr.
1697.

There were also some political disappointments, to be described hereafter; but at last the bell-ringers of St. Andrew's, Holborn, had their chance, and wrote to Sir John Verney to "Congratulate the Celebration of your happy Nuptiall . . . wherewithall not questioning your Accustomed Generositie". On the two former occasions John Verney had been married in Henry VII.'s Chapel, West-

minster Abbey; this time he preferred a quiet Parish Church. In the Marriage Register of St. Mary Abbot's, Kensington, the entry is still to be seen, specially written in larger and clearer characters than the others (for which John probably paid): "April 8, 1697. Sir John Verney, Baronet of St. Andrew's, Holborn, & Mrs. Elizabeth Baker of the same parish, by Mr. Wigan." Much was expected of a bride in those days. Visits and letters of congratulation poured in upon them and good wishes for "olive branches, and that of the better sort. . . ."

Jane, Lady Abdy, to Sir J. V.

"Sir,—Amongst those crouds of wellwishers which every day pay thar respects to you and your Lady, give me leave to Asure you that none more really wishes you all the Joy and satisfaction in your new change . . . and also your Bride, to whom I hope you'll be so obliging as to make my humble service acceptable."

Lady Abdy came up shortly to the house of her mother, Mrs. Nicholas, in Covent Garden, who writes to Sir J. V. : 21 Apr.
1697.

". . . To put you and your bed fellow in mind that tomorrow my Daughter comes to town on purpos to wait on her and your selfe, and I chaling [challenge] you both to mett her at long spoon & custard, between twelf & one of the clock, wheir you shall be most hartily wellcome to us all heare."

The steward had news incidentally of his new mistress, mixed with directions about "the Owll, the pigeons and the Swans' Eggs". A capable woman taking charge of the household management might considerably modify his own position at Claydon, which actually came about.

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

". . . . I rec'd yours (with accounts) and I'le give you directions when I'm more at leisure and at home, for at present I'm at Mr. Baker's whose daughter I lately married. . . . I rec'd the three dozen and nine pigeons and I am glad you catcht the Owll that was there fore I doubt if they do a greate deal of mischiefe to the dove house."

He wishes to have the swans' eggs, and has sent down "12 Bookes, folios and quartos, please set them up with thee former". The list of books includes French and Italian works.

14 Apr.
1697.

" . . . Pray let all the Black Bayes that's round the Hall, the Entry and the Summer Parlour be taken down, and off the Chaires, and Stooles, Tables and Standes (if you can measure it, do), and make it up in a bundle and send it up to me by the Carrier . . . for the Escochens About the Hall lay 'em up untill I come downe, & then we'll distribute 'em among the Tenants. Doe not meddle with the Hatchment over the Doore in the best Court. . . . Give the younger men of the Parish that rung upon the news of my marriage a Crown, and likewise give them, as formerly used to be, ten shillings for a Maypole . . . the East Claydon young men desire a Maypole also."

In May Sir John goes down into Berkshire to visit the farms he had inherited from his mother at Waseing; his wife takes little Ralph with her when she pays a family visit, as Nancy Nicholas writes to Sir John:

13 May
1697.

" . . . Your good Lady & my Cousen Verney was here last night, all the family att La. Anne Chomlyes (she only exsepted), & my nes Pen Nicholas & her two younger Brothers goe today to be treted on shipboard the Bretana, one Cornal Withers is their galant, but it proveth soe very wett & winday that I feare that will be no pleshur."

16 May
1697.

Mrs. Lillie, the Housekeeper, to Sir J. V.

" . . . I heare of a sad fier at Winslow today haith burnt about three score houses."

4 May
1697.

" . . . Miss Butterfield is not well, she gott a surfit going to East Cladon that day last week the Bishope was there at a conformation & she came all out with a rash. . . . She is still ill and out of order who I wish very well again."

This was the first visitation of James Gardiner, Bishop of Lincoln. He confirmed nearly a thousand persons at Banbury.¹

22 May
1697.

Nancy Nicholas asks Sir J. V. whether he has any "Bank Bills or Checcher Noghtes". He replies :

"I never was yet Master of a Chequer Noate, nor did I ever see one, But for Bank Noates I have had many of them, tho' at present I have not one by me."

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

16 June
1697.

"I'de not have it knowne but to yourselfe, I reckon to be at Claydon between the 7th and 11th of July . . . there will come in

¹ S.P.C.K., *Diocesan History of Lincoln*.

my Coache myselfe, my wife, and my three daughters, Perry behind & to ride on horseback by Hodges & Wallis, besides the keeper that may come up with the Horses, but you must consider who shall looke to the Park a night in his absence. . . . There will be 3 mayds to come downe, they must goe in the Stage Coach, but then I know not how to get them from Aylesbury. Wee can't spare 'Em untill wee goe ourselves, and then when wee come there my wife will want her mayd, so they must not stay long after us neither. Soe pray consider whether you can hire 3 horses for 'Em that would carry double, & men to go fetch 'Em and open the gates for 'Em. . . . I write so long before that I may have your thoughts of it. . . . All my Horses will be on the roade to bring me downe; that's the reason that I shall be so put to it to get the mayds to Claydon.

. . . I wish to lodge at my first coming in the best chamber & my wife's mayd within that, tho' after a few nights I believe I shall goe & lye in my own lodgeings & the children within that room as formerly."

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

8 July
1697.

"I sopus it is onely the Jacobits that give it out that father & son is in towne; we hartily thank you for yours, for truly your letters are mity plesing to us alwaies. . . . I find by the prints that you have a new religion set up by you in Lestirshir, I sopus some malcontents under a new name."

"I am hartily glad to find you air all soe well and soe merry at Claydon. . . . If Mr. Abel & his family settles, you will have a near neighbor, if blind tho' still a live, I sopus he is still the fidler & songster."

22 July
1697.

This cheerful state of things did not last.

Margaret Adams, at Baddow Hall, to Sir J. V.

21 Aug.
1697.

". . . I am sorry to find by my Mother's letter that your family has been in such a crazy way & particularly that my Lady's teeth have been so troublesome . . . & for the pain in her breast, my Mother thinks herself obliged to prescribe to her & 'tis whot a lady in this house has experienced with great success when the Doctors feared a cancer for her; & which is only a tanned hare-skin worn allways upon it, with the furr next her skin. This my Mother, who is much all your servant, begs of my lady to try, & hopes sheel find as much good as severall others have done."

This happily proved a false alarm, but Lady Verney's recovery was doubtless attributed to the hare-skin.

As an old widow, Elizabeth Adams revisits her husband's parish, where Mr. Paschall receives her at Baddow Hall.

24 July
1697.

"... I thank you for your news you sent me, but this place Afords me none worth sending you. My Cosan Pascoll & his daughters continues very kind & sivell to us all, & so is the rest of my Acquentanc I have seen, & both rich & poore gives me ther praiers & good wishes which I much valew.

My Cosan Pascoll, thow unknwon, sends his humble servis to you & soe does both the Misis; all the Young Ons are this day gon three miles A fishing, but Miss Kitty Pascoll left a great charg with me to have her humble servis sent in pertickler to your good Lady and Daughters, the same is desired by both my girls."

Mrs. Adams' visit lasted sixteen weeks "of harty well cum". It was a pretty incident in the life of the rector's widow, that Squire Paschall and his girls made her so welcome at Baddow Hall. A black marble slab in the fine old church records that the Revd. Charles Adams had been "a burning & shining light in the Church for XX years". Mrs. Adams was fond of the daughters of the house, and was never tired of extolling their beauty and their merits.

Nancy Nicholas continued to send the news of the town to Sir John at Claydon. Catherine, widow of Charles II., lived at Somerset House after his death. She was only allowed eighteen Roman Catholic servants. The Earl of Feversham managed her affairs, but she had great difficulty after her return to Portugal in 1692 to get the money she was entitled to as her jointure. Her establishment was viewed with a good deal of disfavour in London.

17 Aug.
1697.

"... Tis not all the Protestant sarvants that air discharged, only the Willomites; the Papises & Jacobits are still kep . . . tis talked of as if the King would not return the money over, & Her majesty must come over heather & spend it heare again . . . 2 of our Admirals & their wives air at Tunbridge, the third that is Aylmer [Elmer] is at sea."

John Verney had constantly to assist his old aunts, Cary Gardiner and Betty Adams, and their many daughters, who were ever spending more than their incomes. This he did most good-naturedly; but when he heard that Aunt Adams, after her long visit to Baddow Hall, was settling herself in the expensive and fashionable quarter of Covent Garden, he asked her whether she was in need of money, and then wrote as follows, from Middle Claydon:

24 Oct.
1697.

"Madam,—I may now Congratulate your returne to your Para-

dise, Covent Garden. Paradise of old was indeed a Garden, & that produced delightfull fruite, but there was a Devilish Sting accompanied it. This hath the pleasures of Playhouse, Beau Church (tho' indifferent Preaching), Good Company & plenty of it, Fine Cloathes, Deare Provisions and Sleeping Place, All which needs a good Large Income to beare the Expenses, & that's the Sting. But I ned say nothing of this to you, but only to fill up a letter, for I knoe your Prudence & managry soe good that you can waid throw any waters you goe into. . . . Pray present my service to Madam Margaret, your best Towne Girl, & when you write to Baddow, to Bell, your best Cuntry Girl, & accept of the same from my wife & your affectionate nephew and humble servant, J. V."

Mrs. Adams replies:

"Sir John,—. . . I rit this by the first post to give you thanks Oct. 1697. for your care to let me have sum money, that being wellcum I believe to most in the world, espesiley to one whos wonts are great & incums small. As for my Paradise as you coll it, I could wilingly have bin out of it much longer than I was . . . & as to the plais & fin cloths this plas affords, they have none efect on me, for I nither frequent the one nor weare the other; for the last play I was at, was with you at your return into ingland, & I know you'll be so just as to say I ware non fin cloths, nether is it my greef I have non, my great greef is wont of money to pay my deats & feed my familey . . . my rent I own is to hey for my in cum . . . but when I must give dear I rather chos to doo it in A plas whear I have injoyed my health most in . . . my actions has shoield my prudence to be very small, but God requires non mor then hee gives, & hee has bin plesed to exercis me with soe maney afflictions that if I ever had any senc in me it has been A nuff to disappears them all."

The next spring brought her more difficulties—shared as ever with her nephew, who passes them on to his steward.

". . . My Aunt Adams hath had much trouble of late, her goods being twice seized, first by the head landlady for rent, due from her landlady (for my aunt owed None), then a second time for Taxes and Parish duties. . . . You may be sure I have greate moan made to me about it, others of the same Relation to me are alsoe frequently asking, soe that I have a dull time on't." 24 Feb. 1698.

Yet another upheaval follows, Peg Adams reports to Sir J. V.:

"My Mother continues in her Lodging, & I hope we have got good honest people for our Landlord & Lady. He is a periwig maker & did worke to my Uncle & your Brother & Nephew, his name is Stone, he lived neare Red Lyon Street in Holborn, so the 4 July 1698.

trouble & feare of removing I hope we shall be free from, & I am sure it is high time."

14 Sept.
1697.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

"The Bells, God be thanked, air merrily ringing . . ." [And so the Peace of Ryswick was thankfully welcomed.]

"I pray God give us grace to make a good use of the blessing of Peac. The town lookes with another Ayer than it did sence the peace, & yet still some of the Jacobits air so sordid that they lay wagers that ther is yet noe Peac."

21 Sept.
1697.

"I hope you like the artickles of peac well. I think they be very Honorabl. I pray God the Fr. K. keep his word. I am very glad the neighbours are so kind to you & I shall ever be glad the more you air beloved & that I verily believe you will be, when you air once knon in your own Cuntry."

25 Sept.
1697.

"God send our good King safe and well home."

This was the year that Peter the Great was at Deptford. He had seen King William and Archbishop Tenison and the English nonjurors who some eight years before had opened negotiations with the Greek Church. The Tsar had had troubles at home with the "Old Believers", who used the Apocalypse against him.

5 Oct.
1697.

"The Zar told our King since his victory that he did not doubt to beat the Turk out of Constatintynobl, & to make the Greek Churches flourish their as much as ever, I pray God he may, & in order to this he has 80,000 men at work now, to cut a river from the Blak-sea to be navigbal to that place. When our Archbp. Cant. sent the Revolution Bps. to give him word of a Peac, he said—'What do you tell me of peace? I doe expect greater things than that this yeare.'"

12 Oct.
1697.

". . . If you say what brought the Zar out of his own Cuntry, 'twas to see K. William & a first Rait ship."

19 Oct.
1697.

"Sir John,—This day Peace was proclaimed in all formality," writes Ralph Palmer, "& long may it last, for peace & quietness is best. . . ."

The celebration of the ratification of the Peace of Ryswick was made the occasion of the reopening of St. Paul's Cathedral after the Great Fire.

2 Nov.
1697.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

". . . It is not yet known whether the Archbp. or the Bp. of London or the Dean of Polls preches before the King on the thanksgiving day. If the Archbp. preches, then London reads. Howairs all

the Clergy that belong to St. Paul's air ordered to attend that day. The Thanksgiving is 2nd of Dec., & the Parlt. prorog'd to the 3rd."

"... This afternoon came the Pluvers which air very fatt & wair dainty Birds, & I give you many thanks for them. ... Today the Minister was hanged; he had the respect to goe in a mourning coch and had others follow him. The King can't come till ples God the wind turns." 3 Nov. 1697.

Luttrell gives us the Minister's name and his offence:

"Yesterday 6 persons were executed at Tyburn . . . 3 for counterfeiting stamp paper, of which Mr. Salisbury the Minister was one." 4 Nov. 1697.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

13 Nov. 1697.

"... The newes was sent from the Councell of France to our King that the old Asasinaters air come heather, so last night the Justices & Cunstables has bin upon the hum, & now this afternoon I doe hear they have taken one. I can't yet larn his nam, if I can I will put it in, but he was caried in a coch with a very strong gard, all with their swords drawn abought the coch, & if any body did but look into the coch they struck at them. ... Last night Mr. Hobart came from Newfoundland."

"... At Garawai's Coffee Hous the Ld. Maier's son puled Sir J. Parson by the nose for his reprimanding his father. What will come of it I know not." 18 Nov. 1697.

"... The King received the City Clargy, very much to ther satisfaction." 20 Nov. 1697.

"... The King did on Saturday last restore our Cousen [Denton] to his place again with some exposition, as if he did not like what had bin dun against him, so the father goeth tomorrow to kiss his hand. Burton and Knight air both put in prison & tis thought if they squeek they will not ackues smal folk. Sure, old Mrs. Busby takes herself to be immortall." 23 Nov. 1697.

Nancy Nicholas thinks that Sir John should have shown himself in Town for so great a national demonstration.

"... I find we'll on all occations acct. of a Whig as an honest man; 'tis rely very prudent in you to stay the Thanksgiving day in the Cuntry, & you must let your strong Beare have a full storm on the day too. ... We must talk now only of the Thanksgiving day & a standing Army. I pray God bles our King & God grant we may all be truely thanke full for the Peace, which is all from yours,

ANNE NICHOLAS."

"... The King did not goe to St. Paul's to Church but to Whit" 2 Dec. 1697.

Hall. Your Esqr. of Hillsdon came last night to town; & his boy is now come in & sais ther is leaf cutting & slashing at the Avenewes to St. Jeameses Squair. I sopes we shall heare tomorrow how the Lord Mayor & his contiance [conscience] did brook the musick & all the grave & desent way of worship according to the Church of England. A gentilman was here today, he saith Dr. Manninggam maid a very good sermon on the occation. . . . The fierworks are now going, I pray God they doe no harm."

4 Dec.
1697.

" . . . As to the Parlt., 'twas one of the fullest Houses that had bin sen at the first opening, near 400; many at the fierworks was killed with the Rocket sticks, one of our neighbors had a girl kill'd."

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

Mr. Butterfield wishes to remove William Scarlett, the carpenter. Sir John agrees to this.

29 Dec.
1697.

" . . . The fellow is a quiett man in a house & doth his worke well, but I doubt (he being softly) his badd acquaintance may bring him into Inconveniences If he don't Shake em off in time; & prove an Ill neighbour. If twas he (as I believe it was) that tooke out my Carthorse & ridd him in the night it was a very Ill thing of him, & such tricks may be of dangerous consequence, either to follow his Comrades' tricks on the Road or to bring Rogues to my house, for nights are noe time to doe honest business in, so pray have a watchfull Eye over him as soon as he is warned out of the Towne, or shutt up with doores early."

The rector was saved this unpleasant duty, for Will Scarlett the carpenter was more permanently removed by the smallpox. This disease, from which Sir John's family had already suffered so much, broke out again at Claydon in the spring of 1698. The family were in London, when a maid sickened. Sir John writes to Coleman:

5 Mar.
1698.

" . . . Gett all things that is fitting for that distemper & gett her an honest and good nurse, one that hath been used to be with people that have the Small Pox, & doubtless such a one you may hear of at Aylesbury or at Buckingham, for at such large Towns the Small Pox is very frequently, & I believe the Apothecaries can best provide you with a nurse . . . she must wash all that sick body's linnen at Holmes' house, for none of it must come to my house to be wash't, that being dangerous, nor anything that is used about the sick body until the maid be recovered and the things well aired."

"I am sorry Tom Roades hath the Smallpox . . . I pray God be his Comfort & best Physician. . . . And as I would doe to my owne Brother soe let me tell you one thing, that where the Smallpox breaks out upon a debauch of drinking its Generally Mortall, as it was to Hugh Grove, & thousands more. I doubt not your care of the Wood Sale etc., but I had rather sell noe Wood these seven yeares, than that you should catch that distemper by it. . . . I think twill doe well to send to Doll Roades to secure the Wood Bookes lest Nurses or such sort of people burn Em for wast paper.

12 Mar.
1698.

I hope Tom Roades hath some skilfull Nurse to looke after him, I wish him very well."

Sir John's last letter in 1697 was addressed to Jane, Lady Abdy.

A New Year's Eve Dinner

31 Dec.
1697.

"Madam,—When your servant brought me your noate I was just sate down to dinner with much company, & it was one in the morning before one of Em stirred. . . . A merry & happy yeare to you and all with you. I shall call at your house this morning if not prevented by the Comming in of Company."

CHAPTER III

THE LAST YEARS OF A FAMOUS CENTURY

FOR more than fifty years Claydon House had not known a mistress, and the neighbours, gentle and simple, were prompt to recognize the kindly influence of Sir John Verney's wife.

The Abels and their friends drank Sir John's and his Lady's healths at Christmas. William Abel wrote:

19 Jan.
1698.

"Wishing that this New Year may make you as Effectually happy as the last, & that the satisfaction you then rec'd may be continued . . . in the enjoyment of your good Lady, who deservedly is much loved & long'd for here in the Cuntry by those whome she is pleased to honour with her friendship. We all give you & my Lady Verney & the fair ladies your daughters our humble service, & hope e'er long we shall receive two blessings together, your good company & the Spring, which as they will be equally gratefull, so I am sure to n'one more than to, Sir, Your very much obliged Neighbour & most humble servant."

Sir John's girls having now reached London, Lady Gardiner uses Mary as a messenger, which at the same time gives her an introduction to Rachel, Lady Russell, and other friends. She writes to Sir John:

21 Jan.
1698.

" . . . I desire the favour of you to let Mistresse Molly goe to Southamton House from mee to present my humble sarvic to my Lady Rossell & my Lady Rose, to know how they due this bitter weather, & pray let Mrs. Molly tell my Ladys that this weather maks me very febell, tho' I keep my chamber, & likewise to ask how the Marquis of Tavistock dus and when my Lady hard from him."

Duncombe, a goldsmith, had been cashier of the Excise, and had attacked the Government; he was in the House of Commons and was himself accused with Knight and Barton of irregularities in

the issue of Exchequer bills; his case became notorious because it was a bone of contention between the Lords and Commons; his fortune was reputed to amount to £300,000.

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

2 Feb.
1698.

"I have rec'd the Poaker & Tongues mended by the smith . . . Yesterday the house of Commons turn'd out Mr. Charles Duncomb & Mr. Knight from being members of their house, & ordered a Bill to be brought against them for a further punishment; it's thought they'll be made to pay soundly for there roguery."

Later:

"... The Lords have read Duncombe's Bill once, & put it to the vote whether it should be read again; for it 48, against it 36. 5 Mar. 1698.

... Tis thought the Lords and Commons will agree at last to fill Duncombe's Bill with a Fine certain. It may be they will reduce it to one hundred thousand pounds certain; if so, he comes off well."

"... Thom Tipping is made a Baronet, & in a few dayes to be married to the youngest sister of the two Mr. Cheekes, whose mother is now the wife of Lord Robert Russell. Their brother Cheeke is beyond seas—a pretty young Gentln. of twenty-one. They say this lady hath 50 or 60,000 portion, others say 30, and she is 22 & handsome." 22 Feb. 1698.

"... This day we were at dinner a man dropt downe just at my doore. I heard the mobb about him & thought twas the falling Sicknes, but the weomen rose from table & looked out & found the man was Stone Dead. Soe with difficulty some that knewe him gott him into a Coach and carried him away." 24 Feb. 1698.

"Sir Giles Long, a young Wiltshire Gentln., is dead of the Small Pox, and yesterday was buried of the same disease Mr. Keate, that about two years past kill'd his Gardener in a Passion. Yet that disease is not very mortal in this towne, considering the Vast quantity that have it. Our Parson Dr. Manningham's Wife & Daughter are just recovered of it, & young Mr. Beedon of Berkshire who's to marry a daughter of Sir H. Winchicombe's. Mr. Baldwin that lives in our Chilterns hath it now, at his Chambers in the Temple." 5 Mar. 1698.

"We have little news: 'tis said Lord Tankervill will be Ld. President of the Councell; Duke of Shrewsbury, Lord Chamberlain; Ld. Wharton, Secretary of State; Sir Thomas Felton, Controller." 12 Mar. 1698.

"Yesterday the Commons inflicted the same punishment on 14 Mar. 1698.

Knight & Barton as they did formerly on Duncombe, that the two-thirds of their Estate be forfeited."¹

16 Mar.
1698.

"I have a place in the Aylesbury Coach, I would have you send the Keeper there with two horses . . . if I am not too much tired with the Journey, I shall ride home that night, but if I find myself weary then I'll keep the horses there till next morning. In the box is a bundle directed to me, its my nightgowne etc., which lock up untill I come. . . . I would have Lea or the Keeper lye in the Trunk room to my Chamber. I do not write more because of my so soon coming down, but let it not be knowne, because I would not be hindred by Company."

Nancy Nicholas writes to Sir John Verney:

19 Mar.
1698.

"... The House has bin upon the African Bill today and you have not met with great opposition, yours fought it out 5 ours and at last had some little advantidge if you don't lose it again. I hope you find the small pox not spred at Claydon."

29 Jan.
1698.

Thomas Verney to Sir J. V.

"Worthy Nephew,—I have now resolved to be rather presumptuous then ingratfull, that I may tender you thanks for the engagements you have layd upon mee. And to assure you I am nothing of the nature of that beast, that is soe forgettfull, that tho' he be feeding never soe hard & hungriely, if Hee but cast his head back immediately forgetts the meat he was eating, and runs to look after new. If my silence seemes to accuse mee, beleeeve mee, it was meerly owd to self consciousness of my owne unworthyness to present you with anything worth your reading. Yet I am a little encouraged, you will (at least) pardon my poore scribbling, if not for itself or the writer, yet becaus it carrieth thanks in the front, & they are currant coyne, & in which the poorest may be rich without feare of a sequestration. I beseech you present my cordial service to youre Deare bedfellow, assuring you it is my daly prayer that your loves to each other as lines parallell may be, knoweing noe date till they both meet in one common centre of happyness. But I feare to be tedious, time & opportunity may soe propitiously bee friend mee as in some kind or other, att the least, to endeavour you a larger requiteall, in the interim acknowledge me (what in heart I am) your most engaged Uncle & humble servant

THOMAS VERNEY."

Sir John was in bed for seven weeks, and after he had been moved to London his wife was still anxious about him. She had

¹ See Turberville's *House of Lords in the Reign of William III.* (Oxford), pp. 101-106.

found a lodging for them "In Great Southampton Street in Bloomsbury near the Squair at Mr. Greathead's".

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

17 May
1698.

"I send down tomorrow in the Linnen Box a large Paper Box, you must take it out very gingerly because it is filled with Sullybub Glasses etc., & other brittle ware."

"I received the 20 Pigeons and asparrowgrass that came up & truly the latter are much better than any we buy here." 25 May
1698.

Last Summer I sent down six cane chairs. I would have one Cushion made for Em here in Towne, but want to know their bigness."

Mary Lloyd to Lady Verney

27 May
1698.

". . . I've here sent your Ladyship your Gloves, which really I shall lose by at less than two and twenty pence a pair, for they rather stand me in some thing more, but so if they fit thy're at your service."

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

6 June
1698.

"This is to in Quier how deare Sir John & all his doe doe. . ."

"I heare there is dead one that in her time was a great buty, & a great Statswoman, the Dutchess of Lotherdail." 9 June
1698.

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

11 June
1698.

"I am very glad the Children came well to Claydon, pray give 'Em myne & their Mother's Blessing."

"I often have had thoughts of making the Board Wages room a Winter Kitchen, & add to it by a Doore the little long room that is under the Trunk room of the Purple Chamber." 16 June
1698.

"Six forraigners goeing for France were robb'd in the Dover Stage Coach at Shooters Hill, & lost about 300 pound, & one of them kill'd by the Rogues who got off with the prize. The Gentn. returned to London with their dead Comrade. Severall other Roberies have been lately committed on the Roads about this Towne, soe that it is very dangerous travelling at present." 18 June
1698.

"On Sat. on Hounslow Heath 3 Highwaymen robbed 3 Chariots and servants as they returned from the Wells at Richmond. The D. of Northumberland rob'd. Lord Osulstone was on his Coach-box, his man in the Coach snapt a Blunderbuss but it went not off, soe the Rogues kill'd one of my Lord's horses & Rob'd him too . . . & about 20 persons as they dropt into their hands. The 21 June
1698.

Duke of St. Albans went by 'Em but they thought him too strong to attempt him."

22 June
1698.

"The Carrier cannot take goods to Claydon, it being Execution Day . . . between this & Newgate the Streets will be crowded to-day, because the prisoners are to dye."

Sir John is summoned by Bryan Edwards, under-beadle, to attend a meeting of the Vintners' Company, in gown and hood, for the election of new Sheriffs and other officers for the year ensuing.

15 June
1698.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

"I feare your Daughters have no great pleasure in your deep cuntry & soe very much rain. For this plas, the smal pox is in our neighbourhood, I pray God if it be His blessed will to take it from us."

6 July
1698.

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

" . . . I am glad the Wainscoate over the Kitchin is done, tho' very sorry that one of the Grate Black looking Glasses is broken to pieces. I had better have lost 30 Pounds"—a loss which was, surely, taken very good-humouredly. "Give my Blessing to the Children & tell them I cannot write to them now, I have soe much to doe."

Sir John is still in London in August, and again very unwell. Lady Verney writes to Coleman:

"My Deare is very faint & restless; the Drs. have ordered him 2 great blisters on his thigh."

One of his many physicians prescribes again for him.

Undated.

Dr. J. Cragg to Sir J. V.

"Sir,—This sweat may produce good effects, and that before to-morrow morning. . . and relief the noble parts, cheefly the hart, for this is the course of nature . . . for I conceive it rather a good breathing out than a full sweat and copious; therefore it will need no change of linning. What els shalbe needfull, I shall impart befor I sleep, if not befor supper, & ever remain your servant."

26 Mar.
1698.

Tom Verney to Sir J. V.

"Honoured Sir,—The gout is still in my hand as you will find by my writing, for I write in pain yet it shall not prevent me . . . I am now upwards of 82 yeares old. . . . Sir, your deserts are so great towards mee, that it is easy for any one to number the starres in

the firmament as to numerate those unparalleled favours you have bestowed upon me since the death of your father, for they doe exceed most men to equalize them in this Iron Age.

P.S. Excuse I beseech you all tautoliges, blotts & blurrs."

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

6 July
1698.

"... In the Linnen box I alsoe send downe my Muff & Case, pray lay it longways into the Hall closet."

A large muff in winter was part of a man's dress, but it was time in April to put it away; the *Tatler*, the glass of fashion, pronounced it to be "a shabby superfluity in summer".

"My wife saith if you put into the Syder the proportion of six Eggs to a Barrill she thinkes it will make it fine, you must put in the Eggs unbroke at the Bunghole." 4 May 1698.

Mr. Gardiner to Sir J. V.

2 Jan.
1699.

"Dear Sir,—When I parted with you at Claydon, my grief was soe great, that I could not express it because of the ill Condition of your health, nor can I now tell you how much I am over-Joyed, that you are upon the recovery from soe Violent an Illness, which next to the blessing of God Almighty, I attribute much to my Lady's care, for I hear she has bin an Admirable nurse to you, & I doe the more believe it because of the Grief she showed for you at Claydon. . . . I doe intend to come up to Town about Candlemas . . . tis upon noe unkindness betwixt my Cosen Saunders & I, for we both Love one another as well as ever & the friendship betwixt us both if tis possible is faster tyed than ever it was."

Lady Gardiner sends some books to Sir John to sell for her, especially one "With turky Leather & gilt . . . hoping they may bring in mony which I wont very much". She hopes to get £5 for this one, relying on its binding rather than its contents. 18 Apr. 1698.

Sir J. V. to Lady Gardiner

19 Apr.
1698.

"Madam,—I recd. your letter about the books, & did last weeke speak about 'Em to a Gentn. (for a Bookseller will give but little for 2nd. hand books), he promised me to come & look on 'Em, but I have not seen him since & know of no way to dispose of them.

Last week I had a letter from Dover [his brother's old servant], he wants to call in his money, he takes it unkindly that you & Coz Carey should be so importunate at him to lend his money, & then to take no care to repay him. He saieth he is a sick crazy man &

cannot spare his money any longer. This is the substance of what he writes, which I leave to your Ladyship for consideration."

4 May
1698.

Lady Gardiner replies by wishing to borrow from Sir John to pay Dover; this he cannot agree to, and sums up: "I believe that most people that lend money Expect to receive it again at one time or other."

16 May
1699.

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

"I have bin very ill after my Journey & for four days & nights was always in or upon my Bedd, not being able to sit up a Quarter of an hour, nor to walk three yards, but now I thank God for it I begin to mend, & can walk about with my Cane but nothing so well as at Claydon."

Lady Verney adds:

16 May
1699.

"Pray Mr. Coleman if you think fit let my Lams goe in the Park but the maids must give them milk, I thank you for your care of them."

In Lady Verney's portrait at Claydon a lamb has its head on her lap. Romney uses a lamb in his portrait of Miss Martindale as an emblem of peace and simplicity, but in Elizabeth Verney's case it was more than a painter's "property", for she was country-bred, and the Claydon lambs appealed to her.

Mistress Betty is paying a visit to her mother's family at Chelsea.

18 May
1698.

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

"Pray open the hamper, ther is in a Brown Paper Bagg seven Roots (& some little ones) of Tuberoses, the Seedsman warrants 'em to me for good, & that the month of May is time Enough to plant 'em. I would have them put into the handsomest Potts, & when they are blowne I may have 'em within doores . . . let Wallis send up the Tankard & its lidd that broke off in the linnen box."

30 May
1698.

"My Lord Abingdon is carried into the Country to be buried, I am very sorry for his Death because I took him to be a hearty friend of mine. . . . Ralph the keeper desires a livery, pray tell him I gave him one last year, there is no reason I should give one a livery that doth not wait on me or my wife ten times in a year."

9 Mar.
1699.

Lady Verney to Wm. Coleman

"Mr. Coleman,—Upon Consultation with more Doctors we feare my Deare has something of a Dropcey on him, and that it will be

the llonger before he is well by reason of that Destemper meeting with the other, soe having a desire to see the Children I have taken other lodgings for us all to be together. . . . I will send you word what day they shall set out, the three Children, Nan Webb, and Judith, they five in the Coach. If the Coachman thinks it will be a ease to the horses, the cart horses may draw the coach to Aylesbury. I hope the coach wheels will last while we are in town that we may make use of the new ones when we come down in the Country. Pray send up in the Coach the Cushion Sir Ralph used to sett on & a down pillow, & if their be any rome in the Coach pray let Wallis put up the Cloth carefully in the case; if they cant bring it then you must send it up by the Carryer." [Lady Verney's economy in coach wheels proved disastrous, and greatly impaired the usefulness of their coach in London.] "Give our blessing to the Children."

Then follow minute directions to Nan Webb about the necessary linen. Another portion of this long letter is addressed to her step-daughter:

". . . My Deare Molley, you had best bring up all your Cloaths with you, that is pack them up so as they may be sent up after you. Tell Peg so too, for I don't know when you will goe down againe. Bring up your cloath for now everybody of fassion is in mourning, so all three of you had best to have all your cloaths come up & Peg's greene goune and petty Coat . . . about Wednesday I would have you visit Mrs. Abell & return her thanks for her civility to you all, telling her you are come to take leave of her, & do the same to Mrs. Butterfield before you come." [Pretty manners were held to be as important as pretty "petty Coats".] "Pray Mr. Coleman take the Keys of the Spicery & the preserving rome when Nan Webb comes up & then you may give the maids what they want."

Lady Verney, like Sophia Western, had a pet bird. Sir John, anxious to gratify "the best of wives", wrote careful directions to Coleman about sending "the Blackbird's best cage" to London by the carrier. Lady Verney, in her absence, had committed the care of "his meate and drinke" to Betty, Molly and Peg, and desired that they would bring him very carefully with them to London. This last, with the jolting and hazards of the journey, was an anxious task, but the girls were fond of their step-mother and faithfully carried out her commands. When his coverings were removed, or as Lady Verney would have preferred to put it, when he saw his mistress again, the Blackbird burst into song.

28 Mar.
1699.

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

"... I am glad you are well again, pray keep your selfe Warme. This day I was to have had a Consult of Doctors but Doctor Gibbons is gone out of town, but I hope to have them on Thursday & I think they'l not be against my going into the country for a week or so, taking a Course of Physick with me. ... As to the hoggs, I am glad you have begun to fatten them & I believe they may be kill'd in that short time I stay at Claydon. I am very sorry that a great fir tree is blown downe, pray plant an other in its place since that can't be raised againe. ... I wish the new wheels had come up with my Coach, for these old wheels breake every Time They goe out; on Saturday I was at Little Chelsey & they cost two shillings mending, yesterday I was at Islington & they cost me three shillings for broken streakes."

Lady Verney adds a postscript:

28 Mar.
1699.

"Mr. Coleman, I desire the purple bed be well aared & the bed in the next rome ... let there be wood put in the wood house of the purple Chamber, & for the Parlur Chimney. Mr. Coleman, I am glad to here you are better & wish you may continue mending till you are quite well.

I am, your loveing friend,

ELIZABETH VERNEY."

In these letters affectionate endings seem to be reserved for those of lesser rank, to near relations it sufficed to be "your humble servant".

Sir John writes later:

30 Mar.
1699.

... This day one of my fore wheeles broak downe in the street, that the Coach was dragd home: so that Wheele must be chang'd to be sure; & now Richd. tells me one of the hind Wheeles is broake & he believes none of the wheeles will last downe. I have sent him to Change them all for other old ones but better, which I believe will cost 25s. I wish the new wheeles had come up with the Coach.

I would have you provide against Easter Sunday twelve Three-penny Loaves to give at Church to twelve, the poorest people of the Parish, that come to Church or are prevented by illness, & pray send me the names of 12 that you think fitt for this Charity. ... I intend to set out hence for Claydon with my wife, my son & Harrison. ... There is in the old Dairy a Press Bed (like a Chest of Drawers), pray see it be carried up into my Chamber for Perry to lie in there, & see what is in it, for I never yet opened it. ... This day dyed Sir Wm. Whitmore, my last wife's Uncle, he hath left no Children but had above £5,000 p. ann.

... My Lord of Warwick & Lord Mohon have been tried for

Killing a Gentn.; the latter has been acquitted, & the former found Guilty of Manslaughter."

Luttrell gives the name of the murdered man as Captain Coot, and mentions the trial.¹

Nancy Nicholas hopes that Sir John and "My Lady, the best of nurses," got safely to Claydon.

"... I hope to live to see as much friendship between the two families [Verneys and Dentons] as use to be; Ime sure tis very wickedly don in any body that endeavours to make a breach between them, for I am a true lover of both. . . . I hear tis an universal distemper among horses that the King can have no sport at Newmarket nor scarce a horse to bring him up; my daughter has most of her horses ill of it." 13 Apr. 1699.

"There has bin some misunderstanding between the King & the Duke of Ormond, but now I hope twill be happily maid up again. The town sais the Lord Portland is now leving England to retorn & settle in his own country." 20 Apr. 1699.

"... I was today in my chair I thank God in St. Jeamsis Park, after I venturd first once to Church to prairs, but truly my cough is still very bad. We have a report of great preparations the French air making but that we air so wis we can find out their design, but the Nave offis desir that all the Sea Offisers that was pd. off & not discarded shuld be their today. . . . Pore Sir Ch. Grundy [Gawdy] has bin very like to dy of a fever, but I hope in God he may recover of it; my son [Dr. Denton Nicholas] hopes prety well of him now. Sir John Walter has bin at Newmarket & has lost non of his buty with the smallpox; he has on Monday a cock mach at Oxford, tis said for five hundred pounds but the sum I know not. Your unckell, Sir Wm. Whitmore, was to have bin concerned in it if ples God he had bin alive. . . . My husband & Deney air your servants but none more so than your truly Lo. Cousen etc.,

ANNE NICHOLAS."

Lady Verney to Wm. Coleman

May
1699.

"... Mrs. Fleetwood of Missenden who is very ill hath sent to borrow a shee ass; if her man comes to you for it, pray let him have it & bid him drive it gently. I suppose Mrs. Lovet hath drunk it ever since I came away, & I hope this will not be a pregardis [prejudice] to her, this gentlewoman being very sick. Pray Mr. Coleman tell Mary Sir John's cap is much singed with the iorn, I have sent some of my linnen to be washed soe give her a great charge of it . . . they may have Mary Dickson today to help them

¹ Luttrell's *Brief Relation*, iv. 499-500

... tell Mary I wish her good luck & Abigaill with the turkeys; let Mary iorn my things that I may know whom to blame."

Sir J. V. adds:

May
1699.

"You will have this & a box which is not corded, in it you will see two petycoates of Mrs. Mary's & Mrs. Margaret's & 16 books & a bundle of papers with an old sash, which pile up in the Hall closet."

4 May
1699.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

"I have bin out in hid park in a coch & after that I went to wait on your daughters, tho' I could not alight out of the coch, they wair soe kind as to come down to me, both of them looked very well. Jeney has had a sad accident in her family: a mad Dogg has bitt her gardener & fetch blud of him, & bitt her footboy but thir he broke no skin, & has bitt I think all her Doggs, but God was wonderfully good that he did not bit Bob for he flew at him. We had a hot report last night that the K. of Spain was ded, but today God be bless'd tis blown off againe. Just now the guns are goeing off so the King is gone to the House, so parhaps the Bill may this day be passed; but the Bill for the paper was dropt in the House of Lords, soe now tis much fear'd thir will be a poll. . . . The Lady Falkland has married Mr. Prior who was secretary to the Embassy at Reswek, his father kept the Rhenish wine house in Channel Row."

6 May
1699.

"The K. on Thursday last prorog'd the Parliament."

Matthew Prior, poet and diplomatist, was put by his father to Westminster School under Dr. Busby, but the father dying, he was sent to live with his uncle, who kept the famous Rhenish Wine House in Cannon Row. Here his classical studies attracted the notice of the Montague family, who lived opposite, and of the Earl of Dorset, who sent him back to school, and thence he went to Cambridge. He suffered many reverses in the political strife of the day. He was better as a diplomat than a poet, and was able to do the country real service, somewhat grudgingly acknowledged. He wrote his own epitaph for his monument in Westminster Abbey; his wish was fulfilled at last to have a home where he might

Sit down, and think, and die in peace.

1699.

Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman

"I'm sorry Ra. Roades is dead, pray who is Clerke now. I am also sorry my Deere dye so fast . . . & the peacock I know not what

should kill him, unless it be some Vermine. Just now we hear the news that Mr. Harbot has carried it but Mr. Dormer & the others have a new choise, so don't ring the bells."

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

12 Sept.
1699.

"Admarall Elmer is coming back very rich tis said. The King of Denmark is dead, so two Crowned heads has fallen lately, which fulfils Partridge's Allmanack for this yeare."

It is amusing to find Partridge's predictions taken seriously, but he had not yet been shown up by Swift's bitter satire. His pretensions as an astrologer became the butt of the wits, who foretold his death on the 29th March 1708, and then announced it, and the unfortunate Partridge for the rest of his days was trying to prove that he was still alive.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

17 Sept.
1699.

"... I have had much buisness on my hands, & one of them was to dispos of our Cosen Ruth Lloyd which I hope may be in a good waye. She is gone to wait on 3 of Ld. Feverses [Feversham's] daughters that air all women grone, her work is to do work for them & wash only ther lais & points, she has a maid under her, her wages six pounds a yeare & setts at the Steward's table. . . . Now pray give me some acct. whether in the cuntry you did se anything of the Eclipse, for at London we did se nothing of it, tho' the whol town was big with expectation of it." [So that the Eclipse of 1927 was acting strictly according to precedent.]

Lady Verney to Wm. Coleman

1699.

"Pray, Mr. Coleman, send me word whether a barrel of sope did not come down since the Misses came up, & pray desire Goodwife Cox to make me for my own ware 9 yards of the same edgin she sent up this week & as soon as she can, but bid her be suer it is good woork & the partswell twisted, & you will obleige your loveing friend,
ELIZ. VERNEY."

Besides the thread pillow lace, which was an important industry 8 June. in the Bucks villages, there is a bill for 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ yards of "gold bone Lace att 8s." (=£10).

Lady Verney was justified in her spelling of "sope". In the Authorised Version of the Bible, then not quite a hundred years old, the word only occurs twice (Jeremiah ii. 22, and Malachi iii. 2), and is there spelt "sope". Dr. Johnson gives both spellings; his

magnificent definition of this humble domestic article is an instance of the fine language of the eighteenth century: "Soap—A substance made of a lixivium of vegetable alkaline ashes, and any unctuous substance."

The family are insatiable for medicines and the doctors must be propitiated. Dr. Peter Gelsthorpe writes to Sir John:

20 Sept.
1699.

"Sir,—I humbly thank you for the venison which I recd. yesterday, it is verry fatt and sweet. I wish I knew wherein I might be servicable to you; thatt I might make some return for this and all your favours; my wife is yours and my Lady's humble servt. and gives you also her thanks. My lady writt for three doz. of pills for the young ladies your daughters, they may each of them take them in the morning early and three hours after drinck warm broth, water grewell, or possett drinck, and keep something warmer than ordinary all day; with my most hearty service, I rest, Sir, Your most obliged and humble Servt.,
PET. GELSTHORPE."

28 Sept.
1699.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

"... I supos you heare of the death of the Lady Worwick before this time; most peopell sais she has a hapy deliverance from her wicked husband. It is hotly reported that the King's spedy return is in order to a new Parliament."

17 Oct.
1699.

Nancy Nicholas reports that "Cousen Ruth Lloyd is, God be blessed, very hapyly plased", so Lady Feversham's daughters have been kind.

Elizabeth Adams writes again:

4 Oct.
1699.

"... On Saturday night my Lady Sharlot Calvert [daughter to Earl of Lichfield] was brought to bed of a fine boy, and her Husband Mr. Calvert is so fond of her that tis said he scars sturs out of her chamber. I wish this great fondness may continew, I fear it is too hot to hold." [Mrs. Adams was ever a croaker.]

8 Oct.
1699.

Sir J. V. to the Earl of Lichfield

"My Lord,—I am so desirous to live in your memory that I indulge all opportunities that I may assure you I am your Servant, who hearing that your Noble Daughter hath a son, I congratulate your honour on that blessing to your family. My Physicians advised me to remove into the Country else I had paid my Devoirs for your Multiplied favours to my Lord.—Your Lordps. very much obliged & faithful servant,
J. V."

*The Earl of Lichfield to Sir J. V.*17 Oct.
1699.

"Sir,—I recd. yours of the 8th, & am extremely obliged to you that you are pleased to show a concerne for what relates to me, but my Joy in the birth of this little boy is quallified by a sour accident as I rekon it to my family that lately has happened, which is my daughter turning Papist being a great affliction to me who had taken the utmost care to have her well grounded in the Protestant religion & I thought her of an age not to be imposed upon, being 20 when she married. . . . Sir, your most affectionate & humble servant,

LICHFIELD."

Lady Charlotte was the Earl of Lichfield's eldest daughter and married into a Roman Catholic family. Her husband in 1713 joined the Church of England, and succeeded his father the next year as 5th Baron Baltimore. A younger sister, Lady Elizabeth, was the second wife of the poet Edward Young, of the "Night Thoughts".

The Verneys expected, and had always received, faithful service from those they employed. Sir Ralph's old servant, William Grosvenor, wrote to John Verney:

"I shall always respect you as a Branch of that Family unto which I have already served two apprenticeships, without groaning under any Ægyptian Bondage, or indeed having cause to complaine, being so universally obliged by all that I have preferr'd the Service before my Liberty—and have noe Thoughts of quitting it in Your Father's Lifetime."

10 June
1688.

When such old servants as William Grosvenor, Antony Dover, and Charles Hodges thus expressed themselves, Sir John was naturally full of indignation at the revolt of the footboy Perry.

*Sir J. V. to Wm. Coleman*18 Mar.
1699.

". . . Yesterday Perry staying all the morning out on a small arrant onely to fetch 3 or 4 Quarts of milk, as soon as he came in seeing me angry (tho' I have not strength to beate him) out of doores he went, & ran away, being then half Drunck, for of late he keeps some very ill company & setts with shabby fellows at the Alehouse, but never would to anybody confess who his Comrades be. He hath served me this many times of late & I have often threatened to have him Beate but never yet hath it been done. I heare he was yesterday in the afternoon with two fellows at the Blew Lattice near Holborn bridge & drinking Brandy, & that he lay last night at the Mitre Alehouse in Hatton Garden but left it early in the morning: I think its a house of no good repute. Where

he is rogueing today I know not, I feare he will be trapand on Shipboard, & soe sent away to the West Indies, where the Rogue will fetch above twenty pound. . . . Pray see if you knowe of any pretty sightly boy about us that would be a footboy: in case Perry doth not return.

Ralph & all my Girles live now with me, Ralph came last night, this being his birthday I keep him till Munday. The blackbird whistled the next day he came to town, & continues to do so.

Judith desires to goe live at home, her mother being Old & Crazy: but many people thinke she is in love & loath to be far from him: however she goes off very Civilly, & offers to stay till we are provided: I am sorry for it because she is both a Creditable & Good Natur'd Maid.

Lady Gardiner hath a soar foote; Carey Stukeley the Yellow Jandice; Carolina the toothe ach; Kitty a Cold; & Peg Gardiner weaker then when at Claydon. So that there's a sickly family.—
I rest yours, JOHN VERNEY."

Sir John writes a few days later: "Perry came again on Sunday & promiseth not to do so any more", and Perry kept his word.

27 June
1699.

Lady Gardiner's daughter Cary writes to Sir J. V., her mother's eyes being "so very ill, the best newes my mother can send you is that Mr. Gardiner was heer, & told her he is now fixed in the Ball which is Call'd the bally of Polis [bailey of Paul's] & all the Liberty belonging to it; it tis the same nature as the Bally of Westmaster & she is told that it tis worth two hundred pounds a yeare".

30 June
1699.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"I hear my Cousin Peg Woodward is much pleased with her choys soe I will keep silent thouts of it." [Sir John has told her that "Pegg Woodward hath married herself to one Philipps an Apothecary in Holborn".] "My Lady Anne Grimston rit mee word that when shee was in Wiltsher that the ill nues came of the death of my Lady Rooke to her mother, her husband is one of our Admirals. I find she was highly vallued & consequently greatly lamented. I find death makes no distinction between the wise or the foollis, or the rich or the poor, all must goe to the grave & bee sure old people must goe ther forst. I beseech God fit me for that houre."

18 July
1699.

"... The weather is so hot & dry that the grass is burnt up & the cattill feeds on dry meat & graine, bot wee here all things is plentiful in the country. Heare is noe news now bot of the tryall for Sir William Cooper's son about the murder of a young woman, A quacar . . . this I know you hard of sune months sinc bot now freshly renued, & the last day of the terme Mr. Cooper was taken

as he was pleading for my Lord Chancellow, & this day tryed at Harford Asisis, wher ther is greate numbers of gentillmen gon out of London to heare it. Tis said ther never was so great an Asise ther be Fore, & this last week one Mrs. Binyon comeing out of the West in her own Coach, was set on at Hounsloew Heath & barbarously murdered, they cot her throt from eare to eare, & last week was killed a young Laweir & his man, Mr. Lever of Gray's Inn". [Luttrell mentions both Mr. Lever and Mr. Norton, and that Sir Geo. Norton was offering £5000 for his son's pardon.]¹ "Hee was A Lankishar man, his name I forget bot a baryster of grait fame. They say the prisons was never so full as now, bot in the tims when ther was plots, & tis believed when the days shorten houses will be in great dainger. I rit this hoping you & all my friends will be on ther gard all you can at Homb & a broad. Sir Gorg Northern [Norton] lodged next doore to me 4 yeares agoo at Mr. Perkins', his son as I know with him was one Fryday sentenced to dy for killing one, a dancing master [Harris]. This man was bot 17 yeares old I think, thay have got a reprove, & has since gone into Holland to git his pardon. . . . Sunday night ther was a fire in a cort in Chancery Lane wher 2 houses was burnt & two blowed up."

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

18 July
1699.

"I ame much surprised at dear Sir John's long long & very long Silence to me; this is now my 3rd. to you & have had no answer. I hope in God it is not illnes hindreth you & what els it shud be I cant immajin, & I continue my true freindship still to you, & will believe no less of you.

Cousen Betty Gainsford that mared her self to one Mr. Christmas a minister at Aching Aby, near Sir Hugh Stukeley's, is now come to the patarnal estait of her fater in Surry, 'tis called Crohurst place. The town is now very empty. Madame Ursula Stukeley dined with me yesterday; the towne is very dul & has no news but what the prints afford & them you have. I beg my servis to your Lady & all youres, that am your truly Lo. Cousen etc."

"This is my fourth letter to deare Sir John & not one word that I can have & now that Alderman Baker is gone out of town I cant soe much as hear how you doe. Doe I pray wright to me by post, I shall ever be very glad to pay postidg to hear from you."

20 July
1699.

". . . My good man saies he will doe you the servis you desier or any other that lies in his power, but we both hope you will live not only to see your son of age but also to see him mared & a son of his, which I am shuer we should both be glad of. I supos you remember Mr. Humberston's first wife, yesterday morning her

3 Aug.
1699.

¹ Luttrell, iv. 537-8, 542.

father shot him dead in his closet on his knees, a man of about £2000 a year, a Norfolk gentln."

11 July
1699.

Nancy Nicholas had been unwell with a sore throat, but Elizabeth Adams reports that "My Cosan Niklas has returned from Albyns soe brisk & well that I have not seen her so for sum yeares befor".

Nancy Nicholas herself writes to Sir John:

31 Aug.
1699.

"Some talks as if the Duke of Shrosbury is now suddenly to mary Lady Anne Vahan, the Earl of Carboros only child, the greatest fortuin of England."

This marriage did not take place, as the Earl of Carbery would not give his daughter a proper dowry.

31 Aug.
1699.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

"Ther is no good nues for poor Jacobites, for it is beleved ther will be A new Parliment & the number of fanatics increas in every one, so it foloes it must be ill for them, & their hops must be in the next world, wher fooles may hope for sum hapines tho dis-
pised in this. . . . I will not rit to my Lady now, knoing it is the time of quainton race, which Afords more plesant divarsions than reading my letters."

5 Sept.
1699.

". . . The newes of your being so well as to visit your neibors, & to goe to Quainton Race is very wellcum to me. . . . I hear Admerell Elmer has dun brauf things, & got great prizes, but did not keep them all to himselfe as Admrell Russell did, but has made hand-som presants to all his ofisers & several others, so his fame speedds much About this town."

5 Sept.
1699.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"The Quene of Portugall dyed with only making A holl in her yeare for to wear pendants, & by whot accydent they due not give an Account, more then that humors fell so fast on the plac as it could not be stayed bot senc gangrened notwithstanding all the helps shee had, it sartainly cost her her life in few dayes. . . . Cary had it from sure hands; the Quene's servants heare are to goe into mourning next Sonday, but those at our Court knows not when they shall."

Marie Sophie Elizabeth, second wife of Pedro II., was related to most of the crowned heads in Europe; sister of the Emperor and of the Queen of Spain and of the Elector Palatine, she was sister-in-law of Catherine of Braganza, the widowed Queen of England, who had returned to her brother's Court. The Queen, aged thirty-

three, left several children; she paid a heavy price for the "wearing of pendants", or rather for the ignorance of those that made "A holl" in her ears.

"... The great Pirat, Captain Peek [Kidd] I think is his name, as was sent ovar to destroy the Pirats, torned the greatest of all; & tis said has got 3 hundred thousand pound; this man ventured to land at New York, thinking himself safe there; walkt in the street & was discovard to my Lord Billymount [Bellamont], who has secured him & ther has bin a great present offard to my Lady Billymount, but my Lord wod not let her receive it, knoweing the King has charged hee should be taken when evor they coud. So thus tis thought all his money cannot secure him from being sent hither, & then the King may dispos of him. Tis a sad disapoyntment for a wonting Lord not to dare to take mony."

12 Sept.
1699.

The trial of Captain Kidd excited great interest in England. He had been sent out by Lord Somers with a commission under the Great Seal to suppress piracy on the coast of America, Lord Bellamont and others bearing part of the cost. It was a great mortification to his patrons when Kidd was accused of turning pirate himself, and Lord Somers' political opponents made much trouble about it in Parliament. Kidd surrendered himself to Lord Bellamont at Boston, believing that he had been promised a safe-conduct; but he was sent for trial to London, where the scales of justice were heavily weighted against him, and he was condemned to death. Such of his goods as could be found realised some £6500, forfeited to the Crown; and Queen Anne with her usual generosity gave the money to Greenwich Hospital. Lady Gardiner, judging others by her own needs, felt what a pang it must be to Lord Bellamont to surrender the present of jewels offered to his wife, valued by popular report at £10,000. But as a matter of fact Lord Bellamont had made himself unpopular as Governor of New York by stopping all presents to officials, and in hunting down the pirates, who had many accomplices on shore.

The two men, once friends, died in the spring of 1701: one, as the highly honoured Colonial Governor with a public funeral; the other on the gallows at Wapping, protesting his innocence to the last.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

3 Oct.
1699.

"... The King is angry that his people shold think he intended A new Parliament, so hope my Lord W. [Wharton] is not of the

Cabonet Counsell; tis said that rich Doncombe is therefor undone this yeare, which maks many talk, hee being so obnoxious a fanatick, which puts fears into many that is not pleased to see that party got uppermost."

10 Oct.
1699.

In October, Lady Gardiner writes about a rumoured partition of Spain, but "Time will unfold these Stat Ridls".

19 Oct.
1699.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

"God be thanked our King is come safe & well home . . . 3 of the Grooms of the Bed Chamber was today at an aquantanses house of min, that said they asked the King's Leve they might come by Calis & soe they did & was here before His Majesty; & they say the Germany Imbassater when through Calis in his wae home, & that he their thretend England that when he got home his master would send fier & faggot among us; but the Spanish Imbassator that is in Holond sais that when he that was here gos hom that he would be claped up. As I can picck up news tis sent to you by your truly loving cousen & servant,

ANNE NICHOLAS."

20 Oct.
1699.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

". . . Whot I hear of Sir E. D. [Denton] I hope is a fols report, sum sis that he is a Corting a great fortun, others that he is gone A Hawking . . . near Epsom & he was very great & the Drs mother expressed her useted kindnes to him, & profered him that if he went to Newmarket with her to send to one thir that he might have good lodgings & other accomodations, the best that plas Aforded, but I would not hear that he axsepted of any of thes profers, since he is gron rich & great. She declares she is proud of the head of her family; but before his ffather dieid, he was as litell estemied by her, as other of her nearest relations be, but for her own ends she can cort any body, & turn herself into all shaps."

24 Oct.
1699.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"Now I must tell you a second frit my daur. Gardiner has given me, who was as well at nine a clok A Sonday night as when you saw her. Just as shee was going into bed, & her maid opening the bed, she fell downe flat on her face & brok her nose, which set her nose a bleding, which fell so fast downe into her throt as she was now strangling, A sad sight. Cary & my maid & selfe could hardly Lift her up from the ground, shee was so heavugh. We fetcht a surgin, who had much A doe to make her bleed 3 or 4 ounces. Shee continued in great daunger A long time. . . . I never found her so apprehensive of Death as this time, tho' I thinke shee may over

come this, soe I hope in God you will hapen to bee in London when evor shee dyes. I sent for Pen, who is in continuall affliction for her husband who at present has lost one eye, bot hops his sight will retorn. Pen sate up with her 2 nights last weeke, bot have made her promis mee she will not due so no more. I am sure I share in all ther afflictions & cannot help any of them to ease or whot elc I wod, & my son adds to all the rest much trouble.

. . . I heare the King was so angry at whot the Spanish Imbasidor said to our Lord Justisses, as that the King order'd hee should be told from him, that hee wod send to our Imbassydor in Spain that our King desir'd the King of Spain the next time hee sent an Imbasidor into England, that he wod send one as had more wit & more manners than this had. . . . It was about the confederates makeing the King of Spain's will, in disposing of Spain to severall at his death we say had it not bin for our King, Spain had bin immediately ruened. I find some consarned at this diffarenc and the Spaniard anger, nor fear Franc at this time."

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

24 Oct.
1699.

"Deare Sir John,—That I may be as good as my word this is to tell you a Member dined with me today who tells me thay wair prorogd to the 16 of the next month & that he last night sent the Proclamation to the pres of It."

". . . I beg of you that you not be so very sparing of my purs for in deed I am very impatiant at your long sillense. Last Thursday came all the Palms [Palmer] family to town, she looks more plump & lovely than when you refused her for her sister, but I dont thinke her spouse lookes so very well."

31 Oct.
1699.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

31 Oct.
1699.

". . . As to the King I heare be severall hee is well & lookes well & says hee must be at Hamton Cort most of his time, they haveing sent him out of Kensington by building so much near him. . . . Tusday you know was Ld. Mair's Show & Duncombe has Against that day beautified Lodgate, & varnisht quen Elizabeth's picture & made that place look very fine, which pleasis the people; & whot is better, has bin at all the prisons & set free all as was in, for About 50 pounds debts beesids ther chargis, so now the mob prays for him, but I find his credit is as ill Amongst the best sort of people."

A full account of Duncombe's trial is given in A. S. Turberville's *The House of Lords in the Reign of William III*. When he had become a notorious personage he was elected Lord Mayor, and he

sought popularity by doing up the contemporary stone figure of Queen Elizabeth, outside the City church of St. Dunstan's-in-the-West, Fleet Street. Evelyn noticed in September 1666 that the statue had escaped the Great Fire. It had fallen into neglect again by the action of time, grime, and nesting pigeons. The rector of St. Dunstan's, Revd. J. L. Evans, has had the statue most carefully restored, aided by the generosity of Dame Millicent Fawcett and three other ladies, and it was unveiled once more to beautify Fleet Street in July 1928.

1 Nov.
1699.

Ann Abdy to Sir J. V.

"My Grandmother finding herself indisposed she commanded me to write for her . . . she is very glad you have got so good a Doctor as Doctor Fry, my Grandmother saith she beleives you will be glad to heer a little news. Justice Marshal was robbed a Satter Day of 50 pounds by a sarvant that lived with him six or seven years, ther is abondance of gamesters & sharpeners kild now of late. My Grandfather gives his humble service to you."

4 Nov.
1699.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

" . . . I heare Sir E. D. will be in towne this night, it may be he will be at the Ball at the Princess's [Anne] Cort this night, I am told ther has not for many yeares bin seen so much fin cloths & rich liveris as will ther appear this night, the Princess' manteau & petycoat cost A thousand pounds & the trimming of her petycoat five hundred, & the Duk of Norfock in scarlit imbrodreid with gold, & the Duk of Southamton in black imbrodreid with silver. Sum saies the King seems to dislick the extravent fin cloths that apears in his sit [suite] & saies sure ther is non of money wonting in England. I had a letter from Kity Pascoll, & she never forgets to send her servic to you & my Lady & neeses. . . . I thank you for your care about my two meads . . . at present two does lie in my house tho' one is Enuf to nurs me. . . . I shall never be so unthankful for the great blesing of health as to fain myself sick or lame when I'm not so."

4 Nov.
1699.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

" . . . I have bin this wek in great consern in my own family for myman went sick on Al Saints Day & the same day in the afternoon my own maid . . . went out with the spotted fever & the Bloody flux; my man I thank God is prety well again, but she continues still very daingerously ill. Mobb is so very much about that I hasten to sent this to the post."



Stone Figure of Queen Elizabeth.

*Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.*14 Nov.
1699.

"... I think if you had seen the way of my living this summer you would not have had such thoughts of me. . . . I thought the worst friend I had in the world could never have said I loved hangers on, it being always my Aversion to them tho' I have for a little time had my old mead with me whilst she could get her A servise. . . . This day my Nees Vickers was here; her husband is in a very ill way with his head & eyes, not being able to loock on the lit, or hear any one speak in the room, & all things as youst to doo him good, now he finds none benefit by; by whot she says I fansey it will kill him."

*Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.*7 Nov.
1699.

"... Frank Rogers came from Hinton & brought ill news that Sir Hugh Stewekeley is fallen very ill with his reumytisem & has two Doctors, and tells us of 3 houses being Robed in Hampsher. One a gentellman near Petersfield was from home; there came 8 rogues into his house at seven A clock at night knowing the Mr. was from home, and secured all the servants of the house, which wear about 12 men and women and children some of them, & threatned the Lady to kill her if shee did not tell them wher her money & plate was, but I durst heare shee did not tell them, so some of the thieves was for killing her & more of her family, but some of them hinderd that villany; so then they bound them all and gagged them all and when they had ransacked the house they fled, & in their way met the Mr. of the house, who perceived they were highway men, and one said at a little distance from him, hee knew that man was the Mr. of the house they had bin at, therefore let us kill him. So hee knowing the private ways better than they did, and being well horst, rid for his life, and got from them, and might have raised the country on them, but his care for his family made him hasten to get some to goe with him to his house, wher hee found all bound and gagged, soe no thing is it hard of them. The Country said he lost £700, but the Justis of Peace, as since as sent after them, says not to the value of £100, so that family is all gone to live at Winchester. Frank forgot their name, but says tis a new family come into the Country, and the other houses lost less."

Lady Gardiner writes later that it is important Sir J. V. should come up to London, if necessary in a litter, "& if it is known that will prevent what your enemys design, you being incapable of any publick impleymnt".

14 Nov.
1699.

Sir John consults Sir Gabriel Roberts, to whom he had been apprenticed as a youth, as to investing more money in the African



Company, but his opinion (amongst friends) is that "the money is best in your own Pockett".

Sir John is ordering a monument to his second wife, which is now in Middle Claydon Church.

26 Aug.
1699. William Price, the stonecutter, writes to ask for ten pounds on account. Sir John replies:

22 Sept.
1699. "I would not have you straighten'd, I doe this day write for my father Baker to pay you the said sum on my account, the Inscription & Arms you shall have in a month as you desire or sooner. I hope you will make it worth my money & that you may gett repute & Credit by it, which will bring you into more business in these parts, & anybody that I recommend to you shall be sure to be good paymasters, & that is the life of Trade. . . . Your lov. frend to serve you,
J. V."

5 Oct.
1699. *William Price to Sir J. V.*

"Hond. Sir,—For your extraordinary kindness I shall always be thankfull to you, & omit no pains in the working of it which will in som way manifest that it was a kindness to me & that I Acknowledge it, & as to the Marble that is in it I think it is the best that ever I had, & in a fortnight more I hope to get it up tho' it be a little late in the year."

28 Nov.
1700. In the following year Sir John is employing William Price again for some alterations at Claydon House, who wishes to bring down the "Coate of Armes & Window Stones", and asks for a wagon. Sir J. V. replies that

5 Dec.
1700. "It is so late in the yeare that I did not expect them till spring, I am now with all my family going to London as soon as a house is taken for me. I hope the marbles are very good or I shall not be willing to have them. You may have time to sett up the arms, which when done, I will pay you for. I am also willing to pay you in part for the window stones; you may send them down that my wagon may bring them all at once, but you must make another tripp downe when I return from London to lay the window stones, because I must have a Joyner & Bricklayer at the same time to take down some wall at each window & soe to alter the wainscot & this can't be now done. If you inquire at the White Hart in Aylesbury on Thursday next about two or three o'clock, possibly my Coach may be then there, and if it be, you may come hether in it. This is all at present from Your Lov. frend,
J. V."

3 Dec.
1700. *William Price to Sir J. V.*

"The goods are not ready for the wagon—the Colours will not

be dry enough, for the Painter tells me that the straw will rase the paint off when I come to pack it up. . . . I am very unwilling to have anything A Mis in it, sinc I have took so much Care of the doing of it, & the Painter has done it very well."

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.

21 Nov.
1699.

"I know not whether you have heard of the death of the late Speaker by a gangrene in his foot, occationed by buckling his shoe too straight & wearing it so."

The "late Speaker" was Paul Foley, who was held to be an upright and impartial man; he was M.P. for Hereford in seven Parliaments, in three reigns. He was Speaker from March 1695 till December 1698. At the time of his death, a week before this letter was written, he was employing Sir Christopher Wren to build the beautiful country house of Stoke Edith in a park worthy of its noble architecture. Speaker Foley's fine house has been lost to the nation, Stoke Edith having been totally destroyed by fire in the winter of 1927. Mrs. Nicholas continues:

"My little Scribe having gott a cold I am forsed to gett another hand. . . . I have just now heard a sad story of your Aunt Verney, who being at her prayers, had her head cloths fired, & narrowly escaped being burnt herself, no help comeing to her presently, but at last she was assisted after having suffered much in her hands & face."

The only lady who could be so named was Edmund Verney's widow, *née* Abell, who was still living at East Claydon; she was Sir John's sister-in-law, but as she was "Aunt Verney" to his children, they may have been accustomed to call her so in the family.

"I could not be well enough all last wek to wright to my deare Cosen . . . we have at London most dismall robeing almost every night & abought Hid Park cornor, & last weeke a gentilman & two ladys coming from Chelsy turning the cornor of St. Jeames Park had six naked swords thrust into the coch in severall places att a time."

5 Dec.
1699.

An assault in St. James's Park was considered as a special outrage upon society; in the summer of 1701 His Majesty's order was fixed "on the several gates of St. James's Park, forbidding all persons but gentry to walk therein" (Luttrell).

CHAPTER IV

ROSALIND AND CELIA

AMONG the letters of the undistinguished number of Lady Gardiner's daughters who were in and out of the small house at Islington—Peg (Gardiner), Cary, Pen, Carolina, Isabella and Kitty (Stewkley)—we gather a few more particulars of Pen's life. We have to go back to some of the earlier correspondence to realise her breeding and upbringing.

Penelope Stewkley, born in 1657, had a happy childhood in a beautiful country home. Preshaw nestled in a hollow, high on the Hampshire Downs, some eight miles from Winchester, and the children lived a thoroughly English country life on their father's estate.

Penelope was a granddaughter of Sir Edmund Verney, Knight Marshal and Standard-Bearer to Charles I., a fact of which his grandchildren were inordinately proud. Her mother, Cary, Lady Gardiner, as a young widow had married a widower, John Stewkley of Preshaw, and their children lived with her child and his children as one large family. Except for occasional outbreaks of smallpox, the life at Preshaw was prosperous, the accommodation ample, the hospitality kindly; the children were accustomed to large parties of uncles, aunts and cousins, and a coach-full would leave Hampshire with a heavy load to pay a return visit to their uncle, Sir Ralph Verney, at Claydon, where they were quite at home.

Being the second girl of the last family, Penelope was not always left behind with "the little ones"; and as she grew up she was privileged to stay with her Aunt Penelope, Lady Osborne, who as a widow after the Restoration had rooms "on the stairs at Whitehall", and took part in the gossip of the Court and the society of "persons of quality", but was too penurious to make her young relations very comfortable.

Their cousin, Sir Hugh Stewkley, was living at Hinton, in the same county; he had married Katherine, daughter of Sir John Trot, Bart., and had four children—Hugh, Charles, Katherine and Elizabeth. Between the cousins Penelope and Katherine had sprung up a Rosalind and Celia friendship, and when John Stewkley in his old age moved to a London house, and sold Preshaw to Sir Hugh, their affection became closer than ever, though they could not meet as often.

Katherine Stewkley, in London, to Penelope, at Preshaw

12 Dec.
1676.

"My Dearest Soule,—If I were skilful in magic the first and only thing I should be desirous of, should be to bring you to me . . . in the true feeling I injoy in the pleasing delights of your Charming, Deare, and Beloved Conversation. . . . There has been a great Weding in towne, Alderman Chiverton's daughter (who hath thirty thousand pounds to her porsion but a very plain woman) & maryed to one Mr. Charlton, a very prity man, & an indifferent estate."

Chiverton Charlton, evidently a son of this marriage, was made Lieutenant of the Yeomen of the Guard in June 1708.

"I was this day at the Sessions House to see the Prisoners tryal. Ther was 8 judges besides the Lord Mayor; I saw a prity Mr. Harrison tryed, who was so unfortunate to kill the Shomaker in assisting the Lady Rossell; he was a very civell man, & the most conserned for this most unhappy accident as ever was seen; he had a very faire handsome tryall, & those that spoke most against him could say nothing to his disadvantage; he was acquit, for which every body was glad, & pad his fees, & went home Cleared. The next tryall was one Captain Clinton, for killing a watchman 3 yeares ago; the business at first appeared very foule & it was thought it would have been brought in Murther; but upon an equall hearing of what provocations he gave the gentleman, it was brought in Manslaughter, for which he will only be burnt in the hand, & he is very joyfull it is no worse, haveing expected Death. Mr. Feilding I saw, but it is thought his triall will be put off till next Sessions; ther is severall cast today but it is for trifeling things not worth sending you word of. There was a more remarkable tryall, which was one Mr. Parker for killing an other Gentleman in September last; the evidence was very imperfect against him; all they could say was he parted from him a quarter of an hour before he went out and was killed; but he proved where he was at that time; and that he never wore a sword which the Gentleman was killed with; so he came off. . . . I am, Dearest, yours to all Eternity,

12 Dec.
1676.

KATH. STEWKLEY."

Great interest was taken in Mr. Feilding's trial. John Verney wrote of it in the following October.

11 Oct.
1677.

"This day Mr. Fielding is to be tryed for killing the link boy last yeare. The King hath granted him his pardon in case it be found onely manslaughter, to avoid his being burnt in the hand; but if the Jury find it murther then his Majesty's pardon doth not reach him. This pardon Sir Saml. Morland gott of the King a fortnight agoe, & twas last night sealed by the Chancellor. Tis said Mr. F. hath bought a new perry wig of 20s. price to be tryed in."

Katherine Stewkley, from London, to Penelope Stewkley, at Preshaw

"My dearest,— . . . I would fain send you some news, but I think there is none stirring, people begin to say the Duchess is breeding again, she keeps her chamber, and is very ill; it is allso said the Princess of Orrang is breeding, she has never been well sinc she went over.

"The poor Lady Staning is tomorrow carried to Bramsell to be laid by her father; Sir Nicholas at 31 years of age has buried 3 wifes, and I thinke all of the smallpox. . . . I can write no more, I am so sleepy I know not what I say."

Sir Nicholas Stanning, Cup-Bearer to the Queen, was of an old Devon family of Maristow; his third wife was Mary Jenkin of Treseny, Cornwall.

The year 1677 was a very unsettled one for Penelope Stewkley. Her mother, with her wide hospitality, had entirely overspent their income, and tedious negotiations were going on about selling Preshaw to Katherine's father, Sir Hugh Stewkley, which were complicated by misunderstandings with Will Stewkley, Lady Gardiner's stepson and the heir of the property.

He even threatened at one time to go to law, and to engage "Mr. Finch as his counsel", but Lady Gardiner was assured by the latter, "that he was resolved never to plead for a son against a father". "I hope God will bless him the better", she adds, "for that religious maxim."

Lady Gardiner had pressed her brother, Sir Ralph Verney, to pay them one more visit in their old home. Sir Ralph wrote from Preshaw:

3 Sept.
1677.

"Wee are noe less then 65 persons very well and commodiously lodged in this Little very Little house, which I am sure to anyone that knows the place will appeare little less than miraculous."

He returned to Claydon early in October.

Lady Gardiner imagined that a house at a very low rent might be found in a remote country place, to which they could remove and live cheaply—a quest not altogether unknown in these days.

Sir Ralph Verney consulted his old friend Mr. Carey, as to whether such an ideal house could be found.

“... They will be 16 in family, and they must have one Roome to spare for a Friend; a Coach-house, the stable for 3 horses, a little Garden, and such conveniences as is fitt for one that intends to live very retiringly, theire fortune being Narrow and theire Daughters unprovided. I think a place to keep a cow or two may be Convenient, and soe may some other things too—as near the Church and neighbours. My Brother would need it at Midsomer next and would lease it for 3 years; and I daresay when you knowe him, his company will please you, for hee is as honest a Sober Ingenious Pious Gentleman as I am acquainted with in England. For my Sister I will say nothing, because she is my sister, butt I am shure I love her above all the rest, and I knowe she deserves it.”

8 Oct.
1677.

Mr. Carey exerts himself to such good purpose that he is able to report of a house at Church Euston, about four miles from Euston, near Ditchley and Great Tew, which seems to meet all their requirements. “It stands in a very sweet airt in a little village close to the Church. Its Minister is very orthodox and Episcopall, and I wish he were the best Preacher in England, he is a freindly good neighbour.” Dimensions of the rooms are given; the Pump sometimes runs dry, but “about a bow shute from the house is a fine Spring, that never fayles”. Further questions are answered. There are stables on the Great-road fit for any guests’ horses, “but in this towne I think there is not one Alehouse, which may not be the worse”.

17 Dec.
1677.

Sir Ralph is delighted at Mr. Carey’s success and that he has procured for them a nice house at a reasonable rent, and he has ordered in a store of wood and coal at his sister’s request. She is far from being so easily tied down, and she starts a whole set of fresh questions.

“Is there an Entrance Hall?—No, but a wide passage that serves the purpose.

Is there a back-stair?—No, there is not room for one.

No back-stair! Then we must build one out, they are both cleanly and necessary.

Is there a room out of my bedroom, in which my maid can sleep?—

No, only a closet.

Is there a malt mill?—There was one, but it may be out of order.

Is there a garden?—Yes, but the farmer must go through it to get to his cart-horses in the morning.”

There are no private grounds for the ladies to walk in, but—a supreme consolation—there is a grotto.

Upon this information, Lady Gardiner discovers that her husband has been used to so much company and comfort that she does not see how he can live at Euston. The good lady puts the fault on her brother: “I find *you* think the house would be too small for us, it will after all only cost 5 or maybe 10 pounds to get out of the bargain, the wood and coal can be sold”—a sample of the lady’s economies.

Nancy Nicholas writes to Sir Ralph Verney: “Lady Gardiner hath lost all the money she layd out in building on a nother man’s ground, tis pity this lady should have so many hindrances from growing rich.”

The next spring, Lady Gardiner has started another hare: she suggests looking for a house in Aylesbury. But Sir Ralph gives her so poor an account of it, as a place of retirement, that her husband suggests they had better go to London, where at least “there is no want of houses”. He is very tired of these uncertainties and wishes himself “gon from sweet Preshaw”, and that they could get a house near Claydon. Meanwhile the months are going on, the deeds of sale have been signed, and they have still no habitation. “Sir Hugh is much with us to express great consarn for our going away”, and Mr. Stewkley complains that “this place begins to be more dul to me than formerly. It causeth daily reflections of what is past, and what I do not see I may study to forgett”.

Lady Gardiner can only mourn “that we have to become wanderers in the last stage of our life”, and she falls so ill that she felt for a fortnight that she was likely “to have Preshaw my Grave as it has bin my delight”.

Penelope is much upset. “My father and mother are resolved against going to Euston, and will I fear live in London, which I dread the thought of, fearing ’twill Ruin us all.”

At last rooms were found for them in London, and there is a patient letter from the master of the house to Sir Ralph, from Preshaw:

6 May
1678.

13 May
1678.

"Deare Brother,—. . . Your sister hath been much afflicted lately, may God restore her to health again, and me to a more resoluteness to leave this place, with the reflection that we have Injoyed it many yeares." 2 June
1678.

In June, Mr. Stewkley, Peg Gardiner, Penelope and Carolina went to London, leaving Lady Gardiner and the other daughters to follow.

There is a warm letter from their friend and physician, testifying to the reputation they have left behind them.

*Dr. Robt. Sharrock to Sir Ralph Verney,
from Bishop's Waltham*

30 June
1678.

"Sir,—My friends being fled from us, I can do no less than to send a fair Gale of good wishes after them, if I may possibly do them some little Services at this distance they may command me. But if any ordinary friend neer at hand bee, according to the Proverb, better than a Brother afarr off—how much better is a Brother neer at hand than a Friend afarr off.

My Lady and Mr. Stewkley as they have lived here long, so have they now gone hence with a full reputation of great justice, honour, generosity, and charity. It is true if my Lady had not been a person of great moderation there must needs have been some differences at parting about the common question of Removers, what is moveable, and what is fixt. But being above all little trifling things, she so resigned her judgment and all her informations concerning the Question of what were moveables, and the price of such as Sir Hugh pleased to buy to meet his own content and satisfaction."

The Doctor thinks Sir Hugh has been unfriendly in the matter, but hopes all will be quickly pardoned and forgotten.

*Katherine Stewkley to Penelope, at Mr. Nicholas's House in
the Great Piazza, Covent Garden*

17 June
1678.

"Since the severity of Fate has separated you my Dearest from Mee, and that not for a little time, but in all probability for a long while, & it may be for ever, I am not capable of receiving any greater satisfaction than that of hearing from you; and since it is in vain to complain of the unkindness of fortune, it is my greatest comfort I do not feare absence should prejudice me in your esteem. . . . I hope you injoy all the Pleasures of the Town; and if the Cuntry did aford any newes I would send it you, but you know what a dull place Hampshire is. . . . Yours till Death,

KATHERINE STEWKLEY."

"My Dearest Couzen,—My mother has sent order to Mr. Thomas Goodwin to wait on you, and bring you the 8 pound 16 shillings 16 July
1678.

she owes you, which she returns you with many thanks for the trouble she has given you. You must tell Mr. Goodwin the sum he must Pay you, for my Mother did not send him exactly word what it was. My Father and Mother desire their services to you all. My Mother continues still very lame and ill, as soon as she is anything better she will writ to my Lady Gardiner; as for the Mohair my Mother desired, she will not have it, it is so dear. My Father is not satisfied to be remembred to you in generall, but desires you in perticuler to receive his Love. And now Dearest give me leave to tell you, that though absence is so great an enimie to friends, and that I find it very bitter, yet my Love is to you rather augmented then decreased since I saw you, nor shall it ever receive any Diminution, to the Last moment of the Life of her that is Dearest.
—Yours Unchangeably,

KATH. STEWKLEY.

P.S. My Service I desire to all that are so kind to ask for me, in Perticuler to my Coz. Gardiner. I can send you no News but that this day Mrs. Hobs' Daur. of Cheriton, is married to one Mr. Dean of Oxfordshier. There is a great wedding to be kept this 2 days, we are invited but I do not think of going."

23 Sept.
1678.

"Since it is the will of Fate (my Dearest) that we must be parted, I have only this consolation by your Liveing in London, that I shall heare oftener from you then I shoud if you lived further off: for since I have not the least hope of seing you a very long time, to hear from you is the greatest satisfaction I am capable of receiving; pray when you writ again let me know how my Lady Osborn does, and what is her distemper; and I desire you to do me the favour to send me 2 quire of small guilt paper, and one qr. of large; when you go for my books pray ask when the Romance called the Princess of Cleve will be printed in English; my mother remembers her Love to you and says she will not stay longer for her wescote, but she will not have such a one as you sent the patern of, for they have been worn this 2 yeare, and my Lady Titchbourn tells her that they are not so much worn as flowered silk ones, but however pray send word how much goes in to a wescote and what it is a yard. I did not receive your letter till just now, though I sent purposely for my letters last night; so I fear it will be too late to send to your maid, tho' I have sent it away already to her. My father sends you his service and I have only time to say that I will be ever Yours,

K. STEWKLEY."

Whatever sentimental regrets were involved in their parting, both cousins feel that the decrees of fashion must be complied with, and it is unthinkable that Lady Stewkley should be allowed to wear a waistcoat which had been out of fashion "this 2 yeare".

7 Sept.
1678.

"I am very much obliged to you my Dearest and for your kind

concern for me and inquiring after my Mother's health. She has been this 5 weekes in great danger of death, nor can I yet have any assurance of her life; she still keeps her bed and is so weak she is hardly able to turn in it; nor has it been a slight addition to my trouble that I have not had time to write to you all this time; for besides my Mother's extraordinary illness, we have had soe much company every day, that I hope I need not make any apology. . . . Yet my Dearest assure yourself that to the last moment of my Life I will Love you with as reall an affection as I have promised & as you deserve. . . . I give you many thanks for sending my lace."

"If the most sincere affection that ever was can pretend any-thing of mischif I might then say that I deserved part of the Kindnesse which you (My Dearest) express; for I am so well acquainted with my own heart, that I am asur'd none can have a more reall Affection, a more Lasting Friendship, or a more intire Love, than I have for you; which is so great that I thought it had been incapable of receiving any such augmentation, for I thought when we parted that none could Love you more then I then did (and I am sure it was impossible they should), and yet I find I every moment surpass my self, by Loveing you a thousand times more then I did, or indeed more then I can expres. These are the sentiments that are entertained of you, in a Heart which is wholly yours. My Mother sends you her service, and desires you to buy her 3 plain musleen Cravats for her to lye in; and an ell of brown or yealow holland, yard broad; and I desire you to buy me a Black Whole Laced hood, when we send the money for the westcoat, then we will send for these things too. Pray give my humble service to your Uncle Varney, my Father sends you his most Affectionate Love and thanks for your Letter which he read; pray send me word who you have in Will Bones' place, and if both your maids are gone to you; and do me the Favour to ask Mrs. Gifford (who I think lives at the Surgion Armes in Charles Street) if she did not 3 weekes agoe receive a poynt Shape from me to wash, for if she did not Calloway has lost it; and now adieu my Dearest, if there is truth in the world, then I am yours for ever,

KATH. STEWKLEY."

"My Dearest,—Could the Joy present when I heard from you be expresst, you might Justly beleive it far short of what it really is, nor do I know any way to make you more quesstion the veraciousness of it, then be going to discribe it, which is as much above expression as incapable of receiving any addition; when I think to tell you how well I love you, the subject is so large I loose myselfe in it; and when I have said all that is possible, I am angry with myselfe that I can say no more. Take therefore in a few words the Sincere assurance that my Being shall cease ere my Love to you receive any dimenition, either from the hand of time, or any other

7 Oct.
1678.

21 Oct.
1678.

accident; my Father is very much yours, and says since your Bees are gone from Preshaw he has no concern for any of the Rest, but has order'd his man to look after the two hives; pray send me now word what is worn about the neck with a manto, I know they do not generally wear anything, but all people are not able to go bare-necked this winter. I desire you to do me the favour to tell Mr. Godfroy that I would have him send me down one of his thickest gaws hoods, that is a very pale yealow, of the largest size, and not sloped at all. Pray tell him so, the night you receive this letter, lest he sends me down some things this week, and this hood must come with them. Pray send me word where my Cousen Ursula is, for I hear Major Clerk has given off houskeeping and is at Endford. I have sent up the money that I owe you, and give you ten thousand thanks for the trouble I have given you. I have not time to say any more now, but only to assure you, that I will be till death Intirely yours,

KATHERINE STEWKLEY."

A gauze hood of a very pale yellow was of the latest fashion, which lasted for some years. "The Spectator" considered these so becoming to fair young faces, that a party of girls at the Opera, in their gay hoods, reminded him of a bed of tulips. A correspondent inquired whether it was possible to think of a more acceptable gift to a lady in the country, than a hood from Town,

"After a long and outrageous Search from the Charter House to James Street, and many disappointments", the Stewkleys seem to be settled, after several changes of abode, in October 1678, "Near the Arch in Lincoln's Inn Ffields."

It was apparently an old house, as Lady Gardiner hopes "No spirits haunts it, tho' some noyses has bin hard".

Katherine Stewkley soon writes to her cousin, with commiserations.

17 Nov.
1678.

"My Dearest,—Altho' we are so far parted, yet are you still present in my thoughts, and in my Immagination I still converse with you and injoy a happiness which cruel Fate has any other ways denied me; but (Alas) this is but a small satisfaction, and how passionately do I long to Chang the Shadow into a reallity . . . my unfortunate Condition can admit of no redress but in the assurance that you still Love me.

I desire you to do me the favour to buy me a pair of Fillamot silk stockins for myself, they must be very long but very short in the foot. Pray let them be very strong but not Knit; and a pair of Garters to buckle white and gold. I hear Shagg muffs are worn, pray send me word, if it is so, and what they are apece. . . . Ever yours,

K. STEWKLEY.

P.S. My father sends you his Real love and service, Young is your servant."

The following spring Carolina falls ill with small-pox, "whos life", Lady Gardiner writes, "is only considerable to a foolishly fond mother". Lady Gardiner keeps her at home to be nursed, and dispatches her husband, with the other sisters and half their maids, "to Marrybone". By this ingenious device she effectually spreads the infection.

Katherine Stewkley to Penelope

6 Dec.
1678.

"My Dearest,—If my Love to you were not very ardent, surely this cold weather would chill it, for I do not know that I ever was sincible of a Sharper time, and tho' (even in the Chimny Corner) I am scars able to writ, yet while I can hold my Pen I can never miss one week without presenting you my reall Love. I was told yesterday that a man took his owth before Dr. Sharrock that ther was a load of armes hid in Burland House. I shall see the Dr. today and then will know the truth of it; it is said the last week there was seen a troop of horse who late at night mustered on Maudlen Hill; and a man yeasterday morning at about 2 a Clock saw a troop that were in the bottom by Ffarly Beacon, and he ran and Hid in a wood till they was at some distance, but he thinks they mustered. I will not send you any more of these storys, but only desire you to Present my intire Love and service to my Cousen Gardiner; my Father and Brother are much yours, my brother says he will writ to you this week. Young is your servant; and I will be too Eternity, my Dearest, Intirely Yours, KATH. STEWKLEY."

The ladies would scarcely have welcomed these messages from Mary Young, if they could have foreseen that in a few years she was to take her mistress's place at Hinton. Sir John dismisses her very curtly in his pocket-book—"Sir Hugh Stewkley's second Wife was his Wife's Maid, they had four children, Mary, Sara, Betty and Honoria." As we hear in later years of Sir Charles Shuckburgh visiting Hinton, it seems that the lady made good her position, but there was no hint of this when these letters were written.

Katherine Stewkley to Penelope

10 Feb.
1679.

"My Dearest—Could my wishes take effect you should never have anything that should afflict you; but since they are so fruitless I do assure you that I do perticipate with you in your Consern for your mother, whose health I must wish may speedily return to her; I am much troubled that the smale pox is so much in town. I

pray God avert it from your family, it is a great satisfaction to me that you have had it hoping that you are out of danger. I give you many thanks for buying my toothpick case. I have sent up the halfcrown for it. My Father sends you his intire Love and thanks for your Letter; my Brother is gone to schoole. I desire you to present my most affectionate Love and service to my Cousen Gardiner; and my wishes that she may quickly be in a Capacity of Writing. And now Dearest, Adieu, be so kind as still to continue your kindness to her that is with all sincerity yours for ever,

KATHERINE STEWKLEY.

P.S.—I was reading some verses which I think so exactly the sentiments of my heart, that I will write 2 of them :

Its a weak Love that absence can deface,
Mine is immutable in time or place."

1679.

*"To my Dear Couzen, Mrs. Penelope Stewkley",
from Katherine Stewkley*

"Do not ever fear (my Dearest) that absence shall ever prejudice you in my thoughts; and tho' I hope it is needless, yet will I repeate the assurances I have so often given you of it. If I do not Love you as well as ever any one can Love; If I do not pay you the most sincere affection in the world; If I can Live contented deprived of your Love; and if I will not Love you thus to my Lives end; then take from me that happiness of your friendship which now I enjoy much, and make me as unfortunate as I can Possibly be. I rejoyce very much to hear of my Cozen's recovery: pray send me word which of your maids it is that is fallen ill; I give you many thanks for the paper of the Bishop, which is a very sad thing. I will not now ade any more, but that I am truly yours, K. STEWKLEY.

P.S.—I do not question but before this you have had an account of my mother's health, which makes me say nothing of it."

24 July
1679.

From Katherine Stewkley "To Mrs. Pen Stewkley, at her ffather's house near the Arch, in Lincoln's Inn ffeilds, London"

"My Dearest,—It is most welcome news to me to hear of my Cozen Kitty's being in a hopefull way of Recovery; and I please myself with the thoughts that my prayers have something contributed to it. My Father sends you his intire Love & service; he is very well. My Mother is better than when I writ last, tho' very weak and faint still. I asure you I am not afraid of your Letters, nor should I have been of yourself; for I am confident had I been in London it would have been an unspeakable trouble to me if I could not have obtained leave to have gone to you. Give my humble service to my uncle and my Lady; and my truest Love and Servis

to all my Cozens, and tell my Cozen Kitty how I rejoyce to hear of her amendment, that am, My Dearest, Ever yours,

KATH. STEWKLEY.

P.S. It is the Asize time at Winton and last night there was ten highway men brought into the Goale there."

Meanwhile, Sir Hugh Stewkley and Katherine are pressing Penelope to pay them a visit at Hinton, but there seems a certain jealousy amongst the sisters at the preference shown to Pen. Sir Ralph advises her not to go alone, and Sir Hugh does not seem anxious to invite her sisters; when, after much correspondence, it is settled that Peg and Cary should accompany her, the plan is put an end to by Pen, Cary and three more members of the household falling sick, "one worse than the other", with smallpox. John Stewkley feels "that a great cloud of affliction hath thus overspread our family". And while Pen was so sadly laid up, her Cousin's marriage took place with Sir Charles Shuckburgh.

John Stewkley to Sir Ralph Verney

27 Oct.
1679.

(After a visit to Claydon).

"... The first newes I met with on my return was the death of the Lady Stewkley, she died on Tuesday, this day three weeks, after her daughter was married. Soe instead of wedding favours we're putting on our mourning habits."

"Lady Stewkley hath acted her last scene"; the comments on it are ungracious. John Verney thinks that the whole family did not much grieve at it at Hinton; "Nay, the son-in-law passed some Jokes which had been better spared, I question not but Sir Hugh will soon repair his loss, wherein I wish him better success than in the former."

Lady Gardiner refers to it more kindly.

"My Lady Stewkley asked Sir Hugh's live [leave] to make her will, which he replied with all his heart, presently Shee said Shee was very sick, so no Will was made, but her senses continued very quick and she received the Sacryments with great devotion."

Lady Shuckburgh to Penelope Stewkley

10 Nov.
1679.

"My Dearest,—I can never enough own your kindness to me, both in the rejoyceing with me in my marriage, & lementing with me in the Death of my Deare Mother. . . . My Mother was buried at

Laverstock; there was most of the Company in the Country here, & we made as handsom a funerall as we could; which I sopose you will hear from others. . . . My Father gives you his affectionate love, Sir Charles & my brother are your servants."

18 Nov.
1679.

"My Dearest,—I did not take more satisfaction (dureing that bad time) in anything, then in the repeted assureances of your kindnes to me; which in the midst of all my trouble could not but be extremely pleaseing to me; for my Dear Mother's Funerall, it was my Father's desire and my indeavour to have it as handsome as we could; and I am sure there was nothing spared in it to make it so. I am very glad that People were so kind as to say it was as it ought. Present my humble service to my Uncle and my Lady, and my Affectionate service to all my Couzens. I am ashamed to be so long in their debts but it is what I cannot yet help. Pray give this letter to my Lady Osborn, and now I have only time to ade that I ever am truly yours. I suppose you have heard that Sir Robert Henly has Crisned his Daughter Williamza, which was my Lady's Mother's Name."

Penelope is wishing to give her cousin a wedding present. Lady Shuckburgh writes:

29 Nov.
1679.

"My Dearest,—You joy my heart with the thoughts of your speedy coming hither. . . . Since you will be so kind to give me some clouts, I chuse a peece of diaper; haveing bout a damask mantle already; my father has made me a very fine present, but nobody else has given me one bit of clouts, nor do I expect any. Pray give my truest love and service to my Deare Cousen Gardiner & tell her that my satisfaction for gaining your company is not intire, since I make her so great a looser."

Sir Charles Shuckburgh and Katherine Stewkley were married by licence, dated 19th September 1679. We know by other letters that a newly married couple often remained on for some time at the Bride's home, and the following seems to have been written some weeks later.

13 Dec.
1679.

Lady Shuckburgh to Penelope Stewkley

"My Dearest,—I am just going away from Hinton yet can I not Leave it without biding you adieu. Tho' I am in so much hurry I know not which to do first, yet I need not study to say that I shall allways Love you more then any thing in the world. Pray give my service to my Uncle and my Lady and all my Cousens. I hope you rec'd my letter by Fryday post. I have time to say noe more but that I will ever be truly yours,

K. SHUCKBURGH."

The correspondence is summed up in one of "Rosalind's" beautiful messages to "Celia"—"to your selfe I send my Heart, which is the only present fit for me to give and for you to accept".

Katherine, as the eldest daughter at home with a delicate mother, had been hard worked at Hinton, for Sir Hugh was much given to hospitality. She was entering a family full of historical associations and gallant traditions. Her husband, Sir Charles Shuckburgh, was a Warwickshire Baronet taking an active share in county business. Later on he was member for Warwickshire, in the four Parliaments from 1698 to 1705. There is a picturesque story of his ancestor, Richard Shuckburgh, who must have been well known to Sir Edmund Verney. It is said that Charles I. met Richard Shuckburgh out hunting, on the eve of the Battle of Edgehill, and induced him to join him with as many of his tenants as he could collect. He was knighted, and after this inconclusive battle he fortified Shuckburgh Hill for the King, and only surrendered at last when severely wounded, and remained a prisoner for several years. His grandson, Sir Charles, was to serve his country in many capacities in after years. He was just 30, and of a character and ability to appeal to so intelligent and affectionate a wife as Katherine. There are but few letters after her marriage, but they are very cheerful.

*"For Mrs. Penelope Stewkley at her father's house neer the Arch
in Lincoln's Inn ffeilds, London"* 5 June
1680.

"My Dearest,—There is a Play that I have seen, which I have forgot the name of, but it is of the same nature as the State of Innocence. If you can find out what it is, I beg you to send it me. Pray give my service to Mrs. Gardiner, I wish I could hear that her eyes began to mend. Sir Charles is your servt. & I am ever yours,
K. SHUCKBURGH."

In November 1681, Penelope has been staying at Shuckburgh, and it is provoking that she has left us no details of so interesting a visit.

Lady Shuckburgh to Penelope Stewkley

21 Nov.
1681.

"Dear Cousen, . . . We have bene this fortnight at Norton where all remember kindly to you, & poor Nany is very ill with a third ague; but she vintur'd out with us to Licester, wher we first saw a play, then danc'd & played at Cards all night, & went home to dinner & we were very merry & had the Lord Standford, Sir J.

Egerton, Sir Charles, & 2 Licensersheir gentlemen for our partners, & some Ladys from the Schoole; Mr. Beale, that young Captain Adams is to have his sister, was one; the match at the present is off, but tis thout it will come on again; Uncle Sam is your servt.; Mr. Ashby is marryed to one Mrs. Warin a very pretty woman; & tis said £9000 portion, but tis thought it will fall far short; I cannot fancy Miss Lucy to be such a fine Child, she is only like her brother, but not so handsom but not any resemblance of her grandmother. . . . Margaret says she is sure you did not leave your nightclothes in the drawers, for they were all pulled out and knocked the next day, & there was nothing in them."

Sir Charles is hospitable to his wife's relations, and in December 1681 Jack Stewkley pays them a visit.

Sir Charles and Katherine had two daughters, Katherine and Sarah, and just as their happiness was about to be completed by the possession of a son, she died soon after his birth, on August 18, 1683. The child, John Shuckburgh, succeeded his father as third Baronet, and had one son, Sir Stewkley Shuckburgh, and ten daughters. Sir Stewkley died unmarried in 1759, but this was all in the distant future.

Aug.
1683.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir Ralph Verney

"All your letters will be filled I beleve with the ill news of the death of poor Lady Shurckburgh. Sir Hugh is a most afflicted man. . . . Her three cousins are all here crying most sadly."

28 Aug.
1683.

Cary Stewkley, who was to have been with her cousin, but was ill herself, writes to Sir Ralph that Katherine lived but a week after her boy's birth, "so now she has left three pretty babs behind".

In a letter of Lady Gardiner's, September 5, 1699, she mentions that:

". . . Sir Charles Shuckburgh has maryed his daughter to Sir William Bowden, a barrownet within five miles of him . . . hee was extreamly in love with my neece, that daughter as I thought so well of, & very like her father, they were all at Hinton wher they will meet with a world of company at the races. Hee is a gentell man in all respects, & a man of very good understanding, he has traveld A broad till lately."

Nancy Nicholas further adds that Sir William Bowden is a widower, aged 38, with one son and two daughters: "He has maid very plentiful provition for her and hers."

How Katherine, who poured out such a wealth of affection on



Katherine [Stewkley], Lady Shuckburgh

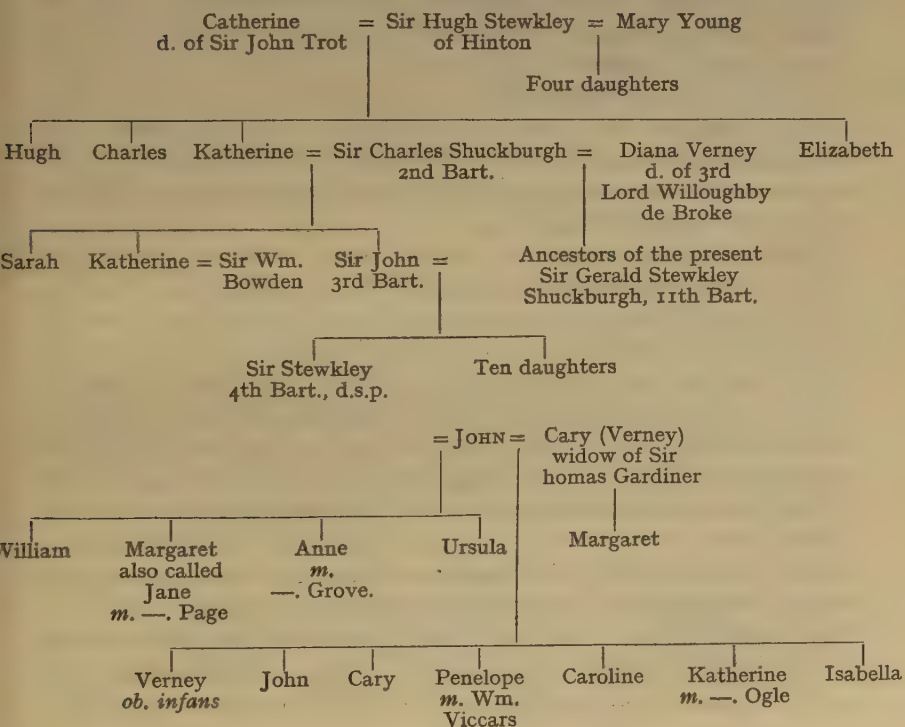
her girl-cousin, would have loved to deck her own sweet maid for her bridal; but when the younger Katherine married, there was a new mistress at Shuckburgh, Diana Verney, daughter of the third Lord Willoughby de Broke (m. Oct. 26, 1684).

“Children not thine have trod my Nurs’ry floor.”

The connection with Katherine’s family was kept up by visits to Hinton, and her surname was carried on as a Christian name at Shuckburgh and is borne by the present owner, Sir Gerald F. Stewkley Shuckburgh, the eleventh Baronet, although he descends from Diana Verney and not from Katherine Stewkley.

In all the vicissitudes of her after life, and with many changes of abode, “Celia” preserved “Rosalind’s” letters, made all the dearer by the writer’s early death. They eventually drifted into the collection of manuscripts at Claydon House, where they have lately been found among letters of a much later date.

STEWKLEYS OF HINTON AND PRESHAW



CHAPTER V

A YEAR OF LOSSES

SIR JOHN'S correspondents were very numerous; besides the business calls upon him as a magistrate, a landowner, and a politician, he had clamorous family letter-writers who were indignant if they did not hear from him at least once a week.

He had at this time two fathers-in-law and three mothers-in-law: Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Palmer at Little Chelsea, Lady Lawley (now a widow), and Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Baker at Hatton Garden and at Penn in Buckinghamshire; who all depended upon his counsel and assistance in business transactions, and his good offices in any domestic disagreements. Foremost among these relations was Mr. Daniel Baker; his hospitality was unbounded, his home was always open to his daughter and her husband, and when Sir John was at Claydon, the carrier was accustomed to call in Hatton Garden for parcels and letters which the rest of the family sent to Mr. Baker's care.

Another family house was that of Mr. Narcissus Luttrell in Chelsea, who had married a sister of the reigning Lady Verney; but he was a recluse, and was too busy collecting books and writing his public and private Diaries, to enter much into the life of his wife's relations. Sir John sometimes stayed with him at Chelsea, and his son Francis kept up with his aunt at Claydon. Luttrell's private Diary, which might shed some light on the family life between 1672 and 1725, is not generally accessible, being written in English in Greek characters. His "Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs from 1678 to 1714", reminds one of an industrious ant; it is far inferior in liveliness to Lady Gardiner's letters, but he had ampler means of information and a wider range of interests. His "Brief Relation" is valuable for reference as explaining points in the letters, most of whose writers were personally known to him. For social and political news Sir John depended upon Mrs.

George Nicholas and his two old aunts, Cary, Lady Gardiner, at Islington, and Elizabeth Adams in Covent Garden.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

13 Jan.
1700.

"... Hear is an other great fortun follon for sum needy cortar Mr. beind dead & has left his maiden hole & sole excretrix & A gentell man told me last night he dieid worth Abuf a hundred thousand pounds; he is carried in to the contrey to be buried & so maney coachis attended him out of toun that thos that ran them said thay could not tell them. . . . I am sory myfelow bumkings should sho ther foley so much as not to choos you who would doo the contrey mor servis than one thay have chos. Now Sir John Busby is dead Tom Busby may have his old lof Mrs. Duncan, he shoeid his great greef for his father in Apearing at the election the next day. . . . I will send the cloth your ducks cam in with this leter."

"... All that knoes you knoes ther is non in the world fiter than your selfe for ad vis, or manigment in all things. And the rest of your neer relations has had larg experanc of your great kindnes to them, for you have maniged ther affares so well that thay have all A comfort abill livey hood."

9 Mar.
1700.

"... It is well for Mrs. Abell shee is lickley to have sum good companey in the hous with her, for I beleeve Est Claydon but a dull plas when you are out of the contry. . . . I find Claydon is a lucky plas for your meads to get good husbands in. I ges all the meads in your Contrey will be wild to live with you now you mary them so fast."

12 Mar.
1700.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.'s daughter, Elizabeth

9 Jan.
1700.

"... Pray tell your father that prety Lady Boucher dyed this day sennight. She was little Mrs. Compton that Lady Penelope Nicholas bred up of a girl, she was Maid of Hounor to the Queen . . . her boy lived to be Xtined but they air both buried to gether; and also tell him that Mr. Neal's son attended the King in his father's place on twelf Day & he so strong of Brandy that His Majesty could scars baire it. If I had more news it should be sent.—Your truly Lo. Couzen & servt."

"Deare Cousin,—Yours today being seald with black wax put me so a trembling I had scars power to open the letter, but I thanke God the insid of it was prety comfortable. . . . As to Business they have contemned that Booke that was writ a Bought [about] Darian, to be burnt by the Hangman on Friday."

16 Jan.
1700.

23 Jan.
1700. "I think I did send you word that the Divill of Holborn is dead. Lord Sherrard is dead." [Bennet, 2nd Baron, died 1700; is "the Divill" meant for him?]

1 Feb.
1700. "I never heard till yesterday, that Mrs. Baker sent me word, that my Lady Verney had a fall out of the Coch. I hope she had no harm by it; pray present my service to her."

9 Jan.
1700. *To the Much Honrd. Lady the Lady Verney, at Middle Claydon, Bucks, from Dr. Fra. Willis, M.D. (Oxon.)*

"Madame,—I am sending Sir John some Craw-fish which were alive this morning tho' they are very scarce with us. I am just going to the Countess of Abingdon, but design to wait on Sir John & your Ladyshp. on Satyrday or Sunday next."

12 Feb.
1700. This medical friend, Dr. Willis of Oxford, has a fresh supply of Bath water which he sends to Sir J. V., which might possibly counteract the ill effects of a feast of craw-fish. "He may take a Quart in a day either hot or cold."

9 Jan.
1700. Nancy Nicholas "is very sorry to find that Deare Sir John has still so lost his Stomach".

13 Feb.
1700. "This being Pancake and Fritter Day & I have Company makes me to begin my letter this morning, and I live in hopes that yours when it comes today will bring me the good news that your father is much beter."

13 Feb.
1700. "Yesterday morning the Lady Roger who was 90 years old last Candlemas day dyed. She only in the morning complained she was a little short Brethed & so she rose out of her bed and sat her down in her chear & said she could not speak—and so dyed & is tomorrow to be bured at St. Gillses church. . . . my kind love & servis to Deare Sir John."

19 Mar.
1700. *Jack Nicholas to Sir J. V.*

"Sir,—My mother being very much out of order & not able to write herself bids me let you know that she has sent the papers of Sydenham's lottery for you to Mr. Baker's."

29 Feb.
1700. *Nancy Nicholas to Sir J. V.*

"Your brother Palmer's marriage was on Sat. mornng. last, & on Sunday he carried his Bride out of town. I am sorry I am not well enough to wait upon them & welcome her into the family."

The Palmers were relations of John's first wife, whose monuments are still to be seen in the old Parish Church of Chelsea with

those of the family of Sir Thomas More. Sir John's brother-in-law, Ralph Palmer, married Catherine Ernle, daughter of Sir John Ernle, Kt., Chancellor of the Exchequer to Charles II. He was descended from Sir John Ernle, Solicitor and Attorney-General, and a Judge under Henry VIII. The Palmers, who married Feb. 24, 1700, lost four little girls in infancy, before they had two boys to live—Ralph, born 1712, and Hamey, born 1716. The old Ralph Palmer was much attached to Sir John, and wrote to him very briefly on large sheets of paper, every week, enclosing the News Letters.

Sir J. V. to Elizabeth Adams.

25 Feb.
1700.

"... I hope I am something stronger, Coleman and the Gardiner has bin like to dye & they both are very weak still, so that for my selfe & servants I have bin much pestered with Docters & Apothecary. Dover is like to dye at East Claydon."

Dover, who had been the confidential servant of Edmund Verney, had retired on his means, and kept up friendly relations with the family. He died the next month.

Cary Gardiner is grieved to hear of the sickness at Claydon, and prays "for their recovery bot espetially for that honest good man my old acquaintance Mr. Coleman, & pray let some of the servants tell him so from me".

25 Feb.
1700.

She writes later:

"I think Mr. Dover lived as long as he wished to due, and longer then summe of his relations desired. Old people seldom has many tears Attend them to the grave . . . ther relations may rejoyce they are released from the misery at most times attending old age."

19 Mar.
1700.

Mr. Chas. Hodges, Soho Square, to Sir J. V.

26 Mar.
1700.

"... I had heard of Mr. Dover's death by Mr. Rogers the Bookseller, hee has been very Crazy & infirme for many years. Mr. Lawce. Lovet the Linen Draper is just returned out of Leicestershire, & brought with him a young Lady he married ther, of a good fortune as report goes. I hear that the Parliamt. rises next Friday come sennight. The king's goeing to Newmarket put off till the Weeke after Easter."

Lady Gardiner's, the most difficult of all Sir John's letters to decipher, contain the most news. Although Islington was considered somewhat remote, her life-long friend Rachel, Lady Russell, Lady Knightley, Lady Lawley and others were generally willing

to send a Coach to fetch her into Town, as she was still a lively addition to any party. Like Addison's Political Upholsterer, she was ready to get up early to see "if there were any Dutch Mails come in"; she too "was more inquisitive to know what passed in Poland than in her own family, and was in greater anxiety of mind for King Augustus' welfare than that of some near relations, and never enjoyed herself in a westerly wind, that delayed the Dutch Mails".

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V., at Claydon

13 Feb.
1700.

"... I am much plesed with Mr. Wattson who showed himself a stout man & wish he may find out thos mischefous rougs, as for reveng wod murder him & Mr. Dormer. I pray God prevent other wicked designs els men cannot goe a brod a bout ther Lawfull occations. I am sorry the theufs last a bout your parts still, bot tis so all over England. I never hard the like, & murder in many places. I hope you make the end of your house stronger than it was, for all those lodgings next the yard are very weak."

Both sisters deplored the growing coldness between their mother's family and the Verneys. Sir Edmund Denton, under the influence of Lord Wharton, the villain of the political piece, was becoming more and more obnoxious to his Claydon cousins.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

13 Feb.
1700.

"... I confess I could not think that barownett could a bin angry at any man bringing him In a bill, considaring his good surcomstances & espetially a Buckingham man. Surely this will lessen his reputation in that town. Bot when men letts ther passion govern them, ther reason & relygion is layd a side, as his sartainly was when hee could kick a man out of doors for what was at most bot for A fault."

5 Mar.
1700.

"... The House of Commons have this week bin oblig'd to stay in town & not to be absent one day, this is the last day of this confinement, they are seeking to in force, not only the strictest Laws of England against the Papists, bot to do heere as the French King dus by the hugunits, to tak their Children from them & have them bred up in our religion, or els to tak all ther estats from them & make them incapable of Inheriting ther fathers' estats—this the parliament has desired of the King. The King told them what other Princes did was no president for him nor them, but that they and he must mind ther own Laws, & ther never was so great violenc A gainst them as now, & tis fear'd if great Severyties is not used, the Papists will be more in number than the Church of

England, which makes our Clergy very firc against them, ther being great discoveries of ther bishshops going ther visitations as our bishshops dus. God knows how it will end, but Doctor Holy of St. Goyles did lately christent a great Emynent Quaker in that Church, which was so full as never was seen the like before, & Mr. Holland has christened another in St. Holloways in the Citty. And one of the greatest of their leading is cum over to our Church, & dus rit against Pen [the famous Quaker]. How the King & Parlament will A gree A bought the forfeited lands in Iorland no man can tell, ther is such great contest & fircness on both sides, bot no tax can be settled till these high disputs be ended."

"I find my Lady is very lucky in marrying her maids & wish you may marry your daughters as well as you wish them. . . . Tis beleaved by the town your Cossen Pickering will be married at Ester to Lord Cots or a Parlament man whos name is kept private, bot if she is so very foolish to marry she will be a scandal to herself. . . . Your Cossen Parkhurst's daughters are great gallants & my Lady Boughton tries her sister, and she never went halfe so fine as Mr. Parkhurst's daughters, I know his prinsipyls is fanaticall. . . . As to publick nues ther has bin given into the House of Commons by the Lords A complaint A gainst the multitude of solisitors & attorneys & that they ruins numbers of men. So wod confine them to a sartain number, how it will end is not known. And ther is a paper as I saw in privat which if I can will get it, in which is presented to the Lords & the Commons A catalogue of 51 Monasterys & religious housis of English as is disparsed in France, Rome, Spain, Portugall & other dominions, as is all maintained by our English Papists, which carry forth a vast sum of mony yearly, besids that it norses up—Vermin—which is the expression in the paper, to ruin us heare by making them so numeros. And this is plainly proved, so tis thought ther will be some sevear Edicts mad A gainst them."

12 Mar.
1700.

"... I am glad you did not back Sir E. D. & if he Avoided paying a common Cevelyty when he fell out so luckily as to meet at one house wher nether had sought each others meeting, I think he can nether Answer it to God nor man, his not Imbrasing so good An opportunity of Indevouring to elector on both sids, our desiring to have all littell feuds be forgotten & to lay aside All anymosytys & a renewed A friendship between you. I am grived to see hee perseverers in An obstinat Unkindness . . . he is young & dus not consider the duty of a good Christian, bot God knowes tis nether his fortune nor his youth can secure him from Death, which so often cuts men off in ther height of youth & prosperity. . . . Tis said my Lady Temple is to be married to A gallant man who is A comysory gennerall, a man of quolyty & A good Carracter, his

19 Mar.
1700.

name they could not tell. . . . I hear nothing the Parlyment has don for or A gainst the Papysts, bot will considar how to proseed A gainst them, as tis all things is unsartain. This account I had yesterday from A clergy man as is often a monst the chif ones of his profetion. . . . I hope this day to have good nues of your being mended that I may have summe comfort for my multytude of afflictions."

26 Mar.
1700.

"I am glad Mitty Lea is recovered A wish hee may live to breed up his children, my Lady's kindness in gossoping with the neighborhood at his house I beleeve was an excellent cordyall to him. . . . The match of your Cossen Pickering is not owned, though she has bin out every night this wick; though she says how she is stared at wherever she goes, & my Lord Cots has bin given Joy by most of his friends, & hee only answers them with smiles, this is still the talke. . . . I pittty my Lady Cook hartily, being cast away before she had discretion enough to be wife to a man of his Carracter, who is maid very misserable. . . . The Parlament gos on vigourously A gainst the Papists & at the Popish chaples ther stands constables & officers to tak the nams of all as gos in. And there is numbers of ther prists ship'd a way & will hasten all A way as fast as thay can. . . . I pray God you may live to bestow your Charyty in the Church & out of the Church to the distressed, for which I hope your Selfe & Famyly may have your rewardes on earth & in Heaven to your endlesse comfort."

2 Apr.
1700.

". . . I went to church on Esterday, bot have got much hurt by going out & came ill homb, and all Sondag night was in great exstremty, and could not ly downe bot labored for Breth all night & Continue to due so still. I never had such a fit sinc I was so ill in Holborn, how itt will pleas God A will end is not detarminable by mee, bot I pray God fit mee for my chang. I cannot forbare riting to you my selfe whilst I can hold a pen."

Here follow several lines of thanks for the settling of business matters for her and her children, and a very clear signature. At the bottom, in her daughter Cary's hand, are some blotted lines:

"This night my Mother has been in such extremaity that she has Laber'd for Life, so now she is joust blouted, so God knows how she shall be; butt we are all in sad feers & none more then your affect. cousen & servant,
C. S."

9 Apr.
1700.

Sir John receives full particulars of Lady Gardiner's illness from her daughters Cary and Isabella; they have not let other relations know, not being in a condition to receive visitors, "& besides my Mother dont much care to see any company". Peg Gardiner is also ill and "can hardly keep her bed, shee is so full of pain, indeed she

is very weak as to her limbs & senses which decays a pace". Cary adds that her mother

"rises to have her bed mead—Dr. St. Amand's aime is to keep her from Cofeing so extremely as she dous & to help her to sleep, butt he says her age is so great & she has so many Comeplaints apon her, & she has so many Chainges that as yett he can give no Judgment of her . . . our atendance is so much that we are forst to have a watcher every night which is very chargeable . . . my sister Grove & my sister Stewkeley was so good as to come and see her. My Mother has the comefort of oure minister who comes every day to pray by her; & we have her pray'd for in the Church . . . desiring your prayers for my Deare Mother & for us comfortles cousens of yours, which is at all times, Sir, your affectionate cousen & servant, Cary S. . . My Mother presents her sarvice, Sister Viccars is here every day but not well." 16 Apr. 1700.

While Lady Gardiner's daughters were gathered round what seemed her death-bed, and Sir John was laid up with a fresh and very painful fit of the stone, a sudden blow came from an unexpected quarter, in the death of such a beloved and lively member of the family circle as Nancy Nicholas. She was writing to Sir John in February, but not feeling well she went down in March to stay with her daughter at Albins, in Essex. Lady Abdy wrote about her cough being troublesome, but she was not thought to be seriously ill. Aunt Adams was

"forst to be whot I am not wiling to be—the messenger of ill news, the death of my Cosen Nicklas, who dieid last night. On Monday John Nicklas was hear, and read a leter from Albins of her walking 2 turns in her Chamber without leading & that she apparintly mendid; so he went to Oxford, but yesterday my Lady Abdy sent her Coach for her Bror., but I beleve she was dead or very neer it before he came; so he is returning to his father, with the sad news of his mother's death. . . This surprising newes has put mee into such a consternations that I know not whot I rit." 18 Apr. 1700.

". . . Cosan Nicklas much laments the death of his Wife & is hartily greefied for her . . . he sent a hears & 6 horses, & 2 morning Coachis & 6 horses, & I think ther was 10 or 12 horsmen to Attend them; & they brought her to towne & directly carried her to this Church, whear she was beried between 9 & 10 o'clock at night. It was a very decent thow privet funerall; he might have had severall Cochis to have met the Corps sum miles out of toun; but ther was non went but Sir John Nicklas & my Lady Knightley's, & thay had both morning Coachis & 6 horsis; My Lady Knightley caried me with her; & in Sir John Nichlasis Coach was Sir John's 3 sons & 25 Apr. 1700.

Mrs. Bety Nicklasis brother, & thos 4 onley caried up the pall: Sir John Nicklas & my shee Cosan Palmer met us at the Church & my Lady Pen Nicklas kept with my Cosan Nicklas at home, ther was no sermon but all the privitsey as could be. I forgot to tell you that her 2 sons & my Pegg went in one of the morning coachis to fech her up. My Cosan Nicklas would not let my Lady Abdy come up with her mother . . . last night she is cum up to her father. I gave her your leter & she sends her servis & will rite herselfe in a short tim. All frends hear went into mourning . . . when my Sister Gardiner's family doos I know not, becos thay dos not let my Sister know of her death, fearing it would daunt her."

And so with all the pomp of six-horse mourning coaches, which the times required to show respect and affection, this beloved woman was laid to rest. The faithful friendship between Sir Ralph and Dr. Denton was continued in their children. Mun and John Verney found again in Nancy Denton the sister they had lost; and Nancy, who had never known a brother, fully returned the affection of the Verney boys. Born in the same year, 1640, Nancy and John Verney shared a home during his father's exile, and Nancy's thirty-six years of happy married life made no difference in their intimacy. She was within a few days of her sixtieth birthday, but she died *young*, with her wit and her zest for life unabated. She belonged to her time, when women wrote racy letters unhampered by grammar and spelling. The formal correctness of the century she was leaving would have cramped her adventurous pen. She was surrounded by affection to the last. Her daughter Lady Abdy, widowed some years sooner, and her son John, the Harrovian, who was to be ordained the next year, were eager to act as her "Scribes" in her last illness.

30 Apr.
1700.

Lady Gardiner often asks after Cousin Nicholas, but they only "tell her that she is ill and cannot walk up May Hill".

30 Apr.
1700.

Lady Abdy, at Covent Garden, to Sir J. V.

"Sir,—The favour of your letter was very obliging as was your kind advice . . . but I cant help reflecting on my great Loss in so kind a parent, & in some measure it is aggravated by my misfortune in having her dy at my house, tho' I comfort myself with the thots that I had the satisfaction of paying my Duty to her, till within half an hour of her death, for I sat up with her till past five a Clock & it pleased God to take her just at six in the morning. I pray God when I come to my last end I may leave the world with as much resignation and submission as she did; but I am

sincible, dwelling on this subject is too mallancholy to entertain you with, therefore will say no more, but hope tho' my Deare Mother is gon you will not wholly lay aside your Correspondence with our family, in which none will be more glad to hear of your welfare then myself.

My father sends his humble service to you & many thanks for your kind letter, he is under very great concern & begs your pardon that he cannot with his own hand do it. We both Joyn in beging our humble services to your Lady & fireside, my Bros. do the like & I hope you'll beleive me, Sir, your affect kinswoman & humble servant,
J. ABDY."

Mrs. Elizabeth Verney, Tom's deserted wife, adds her tribute in writing to Sir J. V. "I have lost the best frind I had, my good Cosen Nicklas, who was not only a very good frind herself, but made me many more." Sir John sends her a gift of twenty shillings. 21 May 1700.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

8 Apr.
1700.

"... I am suer so prudent and understanding and wise man as you are cant think aney think is to be hordid out of my small in cum. [Her daughter Bell was sick and obliged to come home.] I was forst to pay Dr's fees & potcary's bill & other expensis that atended her illness & I paid A bill this winter at Mr. St. Amans for physick that has bin of sum time standing. Thees to things has put me much be hind, but let me doo whot I will I cannot merit your good opinion of me, so must lay all such such thoughts Asid ... except I should quit starve my selfe I can live no spariner than I doo. ... I have not one farding in the world but whot I have from you & say whot you Ples you cannot make me so great A fool as to believe you can thinck I can do much with whot I have, & now I groo old & cannot make so hard shifts as when I was young, for I groo very crasey & am not lickley to troubell aney body long. [She lived another 21 years.] I am sory your tenants run away so fast, I pity all that wonts money, I have a feloy feiling in that sort of sufring. I thinck you knew Mr. Abit the Linen draper, in this street, at the signe of the Crown, he shut up shop & is brock, I am hartily sory for his poor wife & child will be ruinid."

Mrs. Adams asks advice about putting out money with Sir Richard Blackmore upon houses in or by Fetter Lane, on Bishop's lease for three lives. Sir John "does not dislike it if Mr. Nicholas knows about it, she had better not consult the Borrower's Councell, but he must pay her Councell which is always the custom". "I hear Mr. Viccars has got a Reader's place in Lumbard Street which I am very glad of." 7 May 1700.

18 May
1700.

Lady Verney to her Husband, at Claydon

"My Dearest Heart,—It is one of the greatest blessings I can injoy in the world to find it under my Deare's own hand that he is not wors then when I left him, & shall not omit to pray to spare thee & give thee thy perfect health again. . . . I think ever hour a day—a day a week—till I see thee, so I pray God give us a hapy meeting; in order to it I have taken Lodgings at Mrs. Greatheads. I have all the romes I had the last yeare & 2 Garrits more, they will be ready for the two maids to come into them Wendsday night, & for the children on Friday night. Pray let all Lenning come up with the carryier, as sheetes, towells, servants' table Cloaths & all other things as is wanting, & take care of thy dear Self & bring wine enough in the Coach for your use." [Sir John buys the best Canary at 8s. a gallon from Robert Glover.] "Mrs. Lilley was here this morning & has received her money in Smithfield & looks very well." [Lady Verney calls on Aunt Adams, who has a great deal to say about Sir Edmund Denton's engagement to an undesirable lady, "a great gamester . . . the Spark was at Tom's Coffee House in his fine Chariot today".] . . . "I bought Miss Molly a hood but it was forgot to be sent for, I much feare she will want it. I shall be glad to heare when you desire to send the Maids up, & when your Deare Selfe comes up, which will be Joyfull newes to your Ever Loveing & affte. wife to command at all times,

ELIZABETH VERNEY.

My Father & Mother gives their blessing to you, & pray mine to the Children. I should be glad to hear if Mrs. Abell's maid is provided with a place." ("From Mr. Greathead's house in Southamton Street, over against Silver Street end.")

Sir John was at no loss to return these affectionate expressions; another time when he was the one to be alone in London, he writes:

8 July
1700.

"Did my Deare and life know how uneasy and unhappy I am without her, shee would both pity and sometimes wish herself with me. I could not miss this or any other oppartunity of talking through this way with her. And so tell her that shee shall be the whole study and care of my life to make her Easey and happy. I could not forgive myselfe being now from her, but that what I am doeing I hope will tend to make us happy, which shall be the dayly Endeavours of him that loves you Dearely, and am, My Dearest your Owne for Ever,

JOHN."

The gamekeeper's letters speak for themselves, with the hatred of jays and magpies which has come down the centuries.

*Stephen Wallis to Sir J. V. in Town*16 June
1700.

"Sir,—I recd. your Letter & the powder and shot, & I will doe my Indeavour to keep the Jays & Magpies from the garden. I have sent up 5 Rabbets, which is all at present from your humble & obedient servant,
S. W."

"Sir,—Last Weake all Sir Edmund Denton's Deere Broack out of the Park, But the Does returned into the Park, & the Bucks distributed themselves about the country, and last Wensday mornng we heard that there Wass a fat Buck in Thos. Grimes' Grounds, so the Keeper Wm. Hinton & I went down and Coaxt Him into Steeple Claydon feild & into Padbery feild—& soe to Addington grounds, whare Minks killed Him. So we carried Him to Sir Edmund's House, & thay ware very thankfull & said they would be ready to Asist us in case of the like misfortune and Mr. Rite gave us one Shoulder & the Umbles. But I hear Parson Busby is very angry and declares that if he had met us he should have taken the Buck from us.

23 June
1700.

Sir, I hear that on Wensday last young Mr. Howard of Buckingham and one more ware a fishing at the lower end of Buckm., & with their cast nett thay pulled out, att severall times, about 14 ownsis of Clipings of old money, and on Friday some of the town laded the pit Punt. What quantity was found is not knowne, for every one Caught What they could."

A new coinage had been issued in 1699; the clipping of the old coins had been a common offence. Sir Isaac Newton was at this time Master of the Mint, and had for some years been helping the Ministers to reform the currency, though greatly grudging this interruption of his scientific work.

"Sir,—I am glad the Rabbets did not stink," the keeper writes: "I was afraid they would, the Weather was so hot. I send two Couple more; one I shot this morning in the Elm Grove Garden, where there is great many both old and young that trouble the gardin, but they are very hard to be shot or killed, thare being so much Harbor for them. I take care not to shoot in the Park neer the Elme Grove nor in the Warren, when the Deere are neer, for feare of disturbing them.

7 July
1700.

I have a pretty well beat off the Jays & Crowes & Magpies from the gardins, but thare is a great many Blackbirds & Threeshes that Cum to the Cherryes & other frutes of which I have killed a great many, and still they Increast. I am forst to follow them Close or else thay will get to Suchahead thay Will Destroy all the frute in the gardins."

Lady Verney's Blackbird was lucky to be in the "best Cage" in Town. Sir John, with his precise business habits, may sometimes appear to be a hard master, but if he was severe on rogues, he retained the affection of every honest man whom he employed. Some fourteen years later, when the keeper himself had fallen a victim to the darts of death, his widow writes of his last wish to be buried at Claydon, and that she is sending his body thither (May 29, 1714).

Rachel, Lady Russell, after her husband's death, had kept up her intimacy with Princess Anne, and it was probably from her that Lady Gardiner derived some of the Court news which she was able to send on to Claydon. With her own many beloved children, she was able to sympathize with the alternate hopes and disappointments of the unfortunate Princess.

Lady Russell's published letters are more concerned with her own "raging griefs", and with the consolations of religion, than with outward events. But there is a touching reference to the sorrow of Princess Anne and her husband on the loss of a baby son, Prince George, who lived just long enough to be christened. Lady Russell writes:

"The Good Princess has taken her chastisement heavily; the first relief of that sorrow proceeded from the threatening of a greater, the Prince being ill. I never heard any relation more moving, than that of seing them together. Sometimes they wept, sometimes they mourned, then sate silent hand in hand; he sick in his bed, and she the carefulest nurse to him that can be imagined."

Meanwhile the sky was clear; the King had gone to Holland, and the hopes of his parents and of the nation were set on the precocious little boy, who was preparing to keep his eleventh birthday.

The blow fell suddenly, and appealed to the sympathy of every mother and grandmother in England. John Stewkley first sends the news to Sir John:

"... The Duke of Gloster was taken Ill last Thursday, & dyed last Tuesday morning July 30 about 2 or 3 of the Clock. Dr. Gibbons & Dr. Hans were his first phisitians; Dr. Ratclif was called In at last, but then was said he was allmost passed Recovery.

P.S. Leave this at Mrs. Varney's house at East Claydon."

Aunt Adams writes the next day:

I made Pegg send you the sad newes of the death of the Duck of Gloster, which is thought by most will prove of ill consicuent to

1 Aug.
1700.

2 Aug.
1700.



William, Duke of Gloucester.

this nation. There is A yot sent to the King that he may cum if he thinks fit, but most wishes he may not cum yet, till he is perfectly recovered of his late Illnes; for it is said never anyone mended so much in so short a time as he has dun sinc he went to Loo."

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

5 Aug.
1700.

"... I am glad I am not the messenger of that dismall nues of the Death of the Duck of Gloster, who is sadly lamented; tis believed by all that he overheated his blod, in dancing on his birthday, which nevar was kept with so great Joy as now; & am told there never was so great a body of the Clargy as that day with him, & that hee took great notis of them & of all as came to him, & behaved himselfe as a man, to the admiration of all; so tis now said hee filld the subjects' harts with A high expectation of ther futur Comforts in him. So tis lookt on as A great punishment to have him taken from us. The Jacobits confes hee is a bitter loss to us, but sayes it is A Just Judgment on us. The Princess's affliction is very great, but She being with child, her sarvants & all as has had Acquaintance to her, comforts her up that she is like to bring a son ... which sumething a lays her grife.

The King's Ministers immediately seant a Yoath for the King, in case he pleasd to come over, bot whot he will due is not known. They say the Duck is to be buryed privatly so is brought to St. Jamsis, wher the princess is come to. Tis believed the King will have him strictly morned for, and in long morning, which time will show.

Dr. Gibbons has gained great credit, hee saying as sune as He saw him, that ther was no possibillyty of his life without A mirricall, soe wod not let him blood, nor due anything to him, till more was called in. Dr. Hans of Oxford was with him at the same time, & was for letting him blood. Dr. Ratclif, soon sent for, was for letting him blood, and the two last doctors are going to Law. Dr. Hans saying at a great table, that Dr. Ratclif wod do by the Duck as one did as wod A killed King William, bot his name thos as told me could not remember."

The quarrel was notorious and little edifying.

The yacht ("Yot" or "Yoath" or "Yatch", as Luttrell suggests), which the ladies found it so difficult to spell, did not bring King William home. He had been kind to the child and was known to be fond of his godson, but with affairs of all Europe on his shoulders he remained away till October.

Defoe, in his clever pamphlet—*What if the Queen should die?*—while recalling the privileges that the Revolution had brought to

the Nation, reflects that they "hang uncertain upon the nice and tender thread of Royal mortality". No words could better describe the frail little life so soon extinguished.

6 Aug.
1700.

"Yesterday the Duke of Gloucester began to lie in state, and to prevent crowding no persons are admitted to see him but those that are in mourning." (Luttrell, iv. p. 675.)

8 Aug.
1700.

"All things are disposed for the interment of his highness, the Duke of Norfolk being chief mourner, supported by the Dukes of Ormond and Northumberland, all three in long cloakes, and ten of the principal nobility to be assistants."

His mother could not face the ordeal of the funeral.

13 Aug.
1700.

"The Princess continues at Windsor and is daily carried in her chair to the garden, to divert her melancholy thoughts."

20 Aug.
1700.

Eliz. Adams to Sir J. V.

"... The Duck of Gloster was buried on Friday last but those that saw the funrall said it was A very indifferent sight, the toun is very emty, & I hear non newes worth sending; the nobility is in morning all redy, but not their Coachis, onely thos that belongs to the princess's cort, & tis said all the toun will be in befor Micklmas & morn all the winter. . . . Littel newes is stirring hear, onley which is the most modish way of mourning."

A story told by Lady Gardiner comes as a bit of comic relief. The Peer's name is not very legible but is probably Lord Ranelagh. (Luttrell, iv. p. 680.)

28 Aug.
1700.

"... You know my Lord—was ever very fond of his Lady & nevar thought she had things fine enough, so shee going out of town for A short time, A gainst her retorn my Lord got her a nue fine bed for her rome unknown to her, which when shee see, shee asked him what hee had done with the other, & he told her he had sold it. Then—replyed my Lady—I have lost all my jewels—for she had quilted them up & hid them all in the bed. Uppon which my Lord sent to the obholstar who sayes he nevor saw any Jewels, nor no one will acknowledge any thing of them. There is a £100 offered to Any that shall bring Any of them to my Lord, the vallew of them is varyously reported, sume says £10,000, others £8000, others £9000."

1 Sept.
1700.

"... I am sorry the Bishshop of Durham's revenews Incres upon so sad an Acount, & when I see the strang prosperyty of sume men makes me wonder & hee is one of them. . . ."

The prelate referred to was Bishop Crew, who married a second

time at the age of sixty-seven, Dorothy, aged twenty-four, daughter of Sir William Forster of Bamburgh, one of the chief families in his diocese. The present Bishop, who has kindly given us the information about his predecessor, writes:

"This marriage of an old bishop with a young lady, who was a considerable heiress, did no doubt secure to his Lordship an 'In-creas of revenews' and may not unnaturally have appeared to Lady Gardiner as doing so upon a 'sad Account'. Bishop Crew was, of course, very odious to many people on both sides of the 'great divide' of British politics at that time, for those who accepted the Revolution could not forget that he had been a prominent actor in James II.'s essay at absolutism, and those who rejected the Revolution could not forgive his rather abject submission to the great Dutchman."

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

1 Sept.
1700.

"... Tis well the quorill between the officers was made up, that harmless plesurs may not end in blod. I am sure tis sad to think the end of this last Earle of Bath, for in favour to him the jury found his pistoll went off by chanc, to save his estat . . . none really believes it, bot many is glad it is given out so, and I have so much respect for that family as being an old loyallist familly as I am glad of it; but ther is many as thinks that all that line will be put off, & spares not to talk high words about the Dyck of Abermolls [Albemarle's] Will. Tis reported my Lord Mone [Mohun] has killed another man, I hope tis not so. The privat letters says the Germans' victory is much greater than the gaset mentions. . . . Tis said that many of the non-juring ministers will now come in, if they can get liveings, all things a broad is accounted to goe well for us, if our quorils at Homb dus not ruing us, which I beseech God may all be reconsilled."

In the summer of 1700 Sir John's activities at Claydon were again greatly hampered by illness. The physicians recommended a sojourn at the Bath, and elaborate preparations were being made for this journey when it was tragically arrested.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

28 Aug.
1700.

"... By men out of the Citty hearing the ill nues of the death of Mr. Baker maks me conclud you are still at Claydon. I am very sorry the Journey is hinderd uppon so sad an ocation, & feare this will be a great grife to my Lady & cast her into her late illnesse again. Pray give my sarvis to her & let her know I hartly comiserat her lose of so good a father. . . . I heare hee is lamented by

men of good note in the Citty as belongs to Bridwell, who says they have lost a very honest and Abill man, & a very good governor. Indeed I liked him as well as any man I knew so littell. And am glad he did not dye with you, but at the plac wher he desinged to be buryed at. And that hee had all his Children A bout him, tho' we heare he dyed of A soden, which numbers dus of Late years more then formerly, which I pray God may make mee & all my frinds think that our Ends may be the same."

5 Sept.
1700.

"... Mr. Baker I confes has deceived me thinking him so considerat a man as to have his will allways by him, but as it is now left tis his son will have the loss, because his personall estate will be shared between his wife & children, & the wife I think has a doble share. I am glad you come In amonst them."

Mr. Baker's funeral was attended by many persons of quality; when this duty had been performed, Sir John and his wife and his eldest daughter Betty set off in their coach for the Bath. They stopped by the way to call upon Master Verney at Merton, and then settled at "The Widdow Child's House over against the Market House in Bath".

7 Sept.
1700.

Eliz. Adams to Sir J. V.

"They are well at Islington but my nees Gardiner—my sister Gardiner was in town at my Lady Rosles, all that sees her saies she looks very well, The Lady Orford is cum in great hast to toun to see her father the Duck of Bedford whos death is expected every day." [Lady Margaret Russell married her cousin Admiral Russell, created Earl of Orford after his victory at La Hogue in 1692. After his death in 1727 the title became extinct.] "... Not to entertain you all together with malinconeys stories, I shall send you one pees of mor pleasant neus which is credibaley reported hear by good hands that King William is speidaley to be maried to Duck Hanover's daughter. ... There is much joy at the thoughts of it, becos it is said she is A Prodisten princ." [An entirely unfounded Jacobite rumour.]

Aunt Adams is very glad to hear under Sir John's own hand that he has reached the Bath, and that his Oxford doctor is with him, whose prescription

"has bin most fortunate. I wish I had some divarting newes to send you, but this plas is very dull at present, you have all the divarsions & beaus with you, we here no thing but who bids most for the Duck of Bedford's old hous & gardin, to build housis to keep out the good are from this plas."

The late Duke's will saved Aunt Adams from this calamity, although the heir

"was offered by the builders a good house to dwell in and £2,000 per annum for Bedford House in the Strand . . . but as his Grandfather's Will has obliged the young Duke not to part with Bedford House, he has decreed he shall pull it down and rebuild it very finely." (Luttrell.)

Eliz. Adams to Sir J. V.

1 Oct.
1700.

"My Cosan Nicklas told me last night that Duncombe is chose Lord Mare."

" . . . I am all ways very much in want of money but you are one of the best paymasters in the world. In my last letter to you I rit a great lye about Mr. Duncomb's being Lord Mare, my Cosan Nicklas coming throo the Citty heard he had to renounce, for on conchecture he would carry it that he had 8 hundred voycesis more then any on els, yet the fanatics who never wonts cuning or knavery found sum trick to lay him A sid; & now I dare not ventur to send Any mor newes my last being fols."

5 Oct.
1700.

Preparations are now being made for the return journey, visiting Sir John's property at Wasing by the way.

Sir J. V. to William Coleman, from the Bath

2 Oct.
1700.

" . . . I would have Richard and John come out with the 4 Coach Horses on the 15th. Oct., and call at Merton Coll. to bring me word how my son doth, but let them not bait, nor make any stay in Oxford. I believe you must order somebody to open the Gates for 'Em till they come within 2 or 3 miles of Oxford, then that man will return home, he may go and return on a cart-horse if you think fitting. They must get up very early the next morning that my horses may have more time to rest here; I will set out hence for Wasing on the 17th. of this month."

Coleman meanwhile is to go on to Wasing to bid the farmer's wife air the beds, and get in mutton and beef if she can; there are minute directions as to where the family and servants are to be stowed, including the footboy Perry who "may lie in the hole within the passage over the scullery".

"Pray make your journey Easy and do not tire yourself with over travelling. I think Mitty Lea had best lye in the house in your absence, & anyone Else if you thinke fitting, for when you are come away there will be no body of a man but Wallis, and he sleeps so that he never hears anything, Give all our loves to Molly and Pegg,

to whose care you must leave the management of the house & of the Expenses in your absence: & bidd them from me see that the Doores are made fast every night, and good Order kept in the house.

I thinke I am better then I have been, I pray God I may soe continue and therefore I thinke to drink the Waters untill I go hence the 17th. My wife did drink them, but have left them off, not being well of late, but I hope her ailments is nothing but Vapers. . . . Betty V. drinks the waters with me, but I do not Bathe, it being bad for the Stone and for the Gout.

I thinke Sir Jn. Aubery's Hearse is Just now gone thorow the Towne, with a Coach or two in Order to be buried at his Seate in Wales.

The Box Hinges & the Cords is both broak so pray bid Richd. Triplet bring a little Cord with him. I call not more to mind, Soe Rest your Lov. Friend,

JOHN VERNEY.

If Richard thinkes fitting he may come the first day beyond Farrington & be here the next day early without baiting."

19 Oct.
1700.

Lady Gardiner to Mr. Coleman

[Sent by Mrs. Sarah Butterfield to Claydon.] ". . . I was much consarned for you when you was ill, & so was Cary, wee both loveing you hartly well. I am much consarned to think I cannot pay you that money you so kindly lent me . . . soe I rit this privaty to you to desiar of your kindnesse to mee that if I dye befor I can pay you that you will forgive that debt & put it off as A kindnesse to the memory of my dear Brother, & not troble any I leve behind mee . . . soe rest your loveing friend, C. GARDINER."

This unreasonable letter was duly forwarded to Sir John.

20 Oct.
1700.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

She will be glad to hear they are safely home from the Bath, ". . . for Lady H. who came from thence found the wayes so bad as shee had 8 horses to get her out of the dirt, & sinc ther having fallen much raine I feare the wayes are much wors.

All the nues heare is that the King Landed in Ingland on Friday night, & dined at Sir Josea Child's house by the Green Man, soe will be this night in London. My other nues is that Sir Samuel Grimston sickened on Wensday last and dyed A Thursday. Tis said he had given £30,000 to his granddaughter & his Estate to the second son of Sir William Lucken his nevugh & godson. But I tell nothing of this for truth, in a short time I shall know his will as to whot is public. . . . Daughter Gardiner cannot sleep A nights & grones so much as wod grive any Christian to hear her."

Lady Gardiner is anxious to know whether they

"have overcome all the hazards of wayes & watters. . . . I hard not anything as was posted up in the Citty . . . but heare the not making Sir Charles Doncome Lord Maier has maid great Divitions A mongst the Citty sinc . . . Sir Samuel Grimston's will . . . is condemned by all as heares of it—tis said as he lived he died." 29 Oct. 1700.

The anxieties of the home journey were not exaggerated. Sir John reached Wasing only to have another attack of pain there, and when he was able to travel the "wayes & watters" treated them very badly on the road back to Claydon.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

7 Nov.
1700.

"I received yours dated 3rd. Nov. by which I find after all difficultys & dangars you are safely arrived at sweet Claydon, which I hartly thang God for, having hard of severall ill accidents has maid mee have a continuall feare for you & find it not without reason; You being soe near being killed. I hope my Ladies little wounds are well A gaine, & that her breast may receive noe pre-dygys by the foll . . . for to this day I find the hort at my head very ill often, that I had in my ovar-through, bot her youth may ware off whot age can nevar doe. As for your scantly Lodging at the Ale House, & long tablecloths for shets, & the costly Suppar is pleasant enough now tis past, but your frits & horts & bracking the glasis I am hartly sory for, & pray you may nevar Have Any such ill accyidents more. I am glad you find your son soe well, I pray God bless him & you to live many happy yeares together. We all dronk your health hartly on the 5th. of Novembar [his birth-day]. I am glad my God Daughter is kept soe well & the rest of the famly."

Lady Gardiner had happily other concerns at her old home besides her tendency to borrow money from Sir John's retainers. She kept up a friendship in many of the cottages. There was much distress in the county, and many robberies from the parks of the gentry, who specially valued their deer. Lady Gardiner writes:

"I am sorry to find that Bates is so grat a roug as to Rob your park, becaus he is I think grandschild to Gooddy Clemmons, who I nevar hard ill of, but the best parents in the world may have wicked children. I wish he ware rich, for then you might make him smart for it, but I thinke tis death for sume Classis to steall A deare; but belive you wod not take A way his life; but Imprisonment will bring his famly on the parish, soe you will suffer all wayes." 29 Oct. 1700.

A few days later she writes again:

7 Nov.
1700.

"I wish Bates could clear himselfe of that horrid act of Robing your park, for his grand-Mothers & Mothers' sakes, but tho' I know him not, feare he is guilty, however tis well dun of his Uncle Bates to try if he can get him cleare, that is but naturall affection."

Bates was an old name in the Middle Claydon Parish Register, where there are many entries of their baptisms during the preceding century.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"... I sent my maid to London to see for A leter from you. . . . I am extreemely consarned to find my nevegh Ralph is ill, & now as impatient to heare how he dus. I pray God presarve him from an Inward Fevoure on the Spirits which many have, but hope Dr. Willis being with him may prevent that, or any other Complant as might In danger him. God in mercy presarve & make him a good & a prosperous man. My prayrs shall atend him day & night. . . . I have hard Sir E. D. nevar loved the Cuntry Divartions, but feare he will be undon by his father. I heare he will tak care of Jack Denton, & am sure Jack Nicholas has a very good father, so ther is no feare of his doing well, but find by many hee is not a man thought capabill of great things. . . . I wish Sir E. D. may find out the man as killed his deare & wish Bates may be cleared from stealing them. If they proseed without conviction thay will destroy many parks."

What became of Bates the deer-stealer is unknown.

"Lady Anne Grimston has the house during her widowhood & A £1,000 a yeare without Tax. I hear my Lord Notingham is condemned . . . & know ever sinc I remember there has bin great contest about bringing the Assizes to Buckingham & wonder my Lord Wharton did not appear for them."

16 Nov.
1700.

"... The Parllament is put off till January that the King may see whot measures the French King will take, that sayes hee wod mak good the conditions About Franc in the tretim of Peac. But the Emperor not ratyfying that part of the tretim hee is not obliged to make it good. Soe there was great rejoyceing at the nues of the King of Spain's death, & a second son of the Dolphin is now set in Franc as the King of Spain; his name is Jams I think, & has gardes allowed him, this is according to the King of Spain's will. Bot tho' tis said that crowne dus fall by rit to the French King, it being not in the power of the King of Spain to give it, but must fall to the Dolphin as eldest Son, so how it will be is very unsartain. Bot the French King is drawing his forces tords Spain, tis likewise thought that there will be a match between this new King of Spain & Princess Anne our King Jamesis daughter. You know this can

be but Immagenation, but tis said Itly and Porty gall & Napls will hinder this Elected King all they can, besides the Duck of Bavaria, & all the Confederat princes, & the Emperour tis beleevd will due the same."

[She is glad to hear her nephew is better and hopes his father will keep him with him till he is quite well.] "I find Jones now mannaging all the afares of Sir E. D. and none thinking hee will loose by it. A Court place is an unsartainty; A profetion is of more advantage to A youngare brother, who if hee has not Larning had better bin A marchant then A courtiare. I find Mun Denton and Jack was to visit you, the one I think means well & often will discours very sencsibly, I find him desiarous to keep that kindness & Corrispondency with you as is sutybill to the relation of kindred & neighborhood; bot wonder Jack dars to come to you for I hard Nelly wod visit mee as well as my Sister if he might, but no more of thos afars. 3 Dec. 1700.

I find Justis Lygo of Alsbury was with you, soe hope hee is your frind, Inead I hard the pleasintest Jest of him & Justis Busby who I find nethar ther wives nor thay can forbare fearing each other, but hope thay are both your frinds and then shall respect them both, but Mr. Busby I must like best for old A quaintance sake. Tis hotly reported that this parliament will be desolved & some hops not, thinking the next will take off the prerogative of the King more then that which now is, so find men are much devided in their opinyons. Some rumours there is as if the King wod step for a short time into Holland to treat with severall princes as wod meet him ther, but this I think is not credited by many. The town is quit out of morning till after Christmas, & then to goe in for the King of Spain. Ther being no pope Chosen yet all things at rome is in disorders, & tis sayd the Court of rome cares not to have the Dolphin's son King of Spain. Pray give my humble sarvices to my Lady and neesis and tell her that now 50 and 60 pounds for A flanders Cast head is often given, this is very true but tis thought thay will not sune be payd for. But to return to whot is my presant consarn I shall be glad to know how your frinds Incresis as to an Election, one Enymy sets down Mr. Peck & hope your Interest will prevayle; or els belive you will have foule play.

My nevegh Glenham being come to London on a Jury was to see us & was glad to heare you was soe much mended, but when he saw poor Pegg he was strock with the sad Spectycall & told mee he could not Immagened to have seen so great a chang in her, tho' I had rit him word of it . . . hee could not understand most words she said, which most times non of us can due. He hastened out from her to vent his troble and tell us whot I now rit, & wept hartyly for her."

The close of the year 1700 found many of the characters in these annals poorer than at its commencement.

Princess Anne's loss was the most pathetic, in the death of her little son the Duke of Gloucester.

Sir John Verney had lost in Nancy Nicholas his earliest friend, and Lady Abdy and her brothers their gifted and beloved mother.

Lady Verney had lost, in Daniel Baker's death, her father and her childhood's home.

CHAPTER VI

RALPH VERNEY AT MERTON COLLEGE

WE have no details of Ralph Verney's early education. As an only son and Sir Ralph's only surviving grandson, he was infinitely precious and much welcomed everywhere, but not over-indulged. His mother's family, the Palmers, took a great interest in him; his grandmother had a special tenderness for him—he was a Sunday's child, born at her house in Little Chelsea, 18th March 1683, and christened on the Tuesday following by Mr. Seward at St. Mary Abbott's, Kensington, as is shown in the Parish Register of that church: "Gossips, his two Grandfathers, Sir Ralph Verney and Ralph Palmer, and Lady Elizabeth Wiseman, daughter to Lord North, since Countess of Yarmouth." He lost his mother when he was three years old.

When inquiries were being made a few years earlier about the education of Ralph Verney's cousins at East Claydon, there is a note kept of the expenses of an "Academy" with a varied athletic programme and a very small flavouring of book-learning: 8 Nov.
1681.

"For entrances distributed amongst	
all the masters	£07—00—00.
For his quarter and his man	39—00—00.

For that he learneth to Ride,
to fence,
to dance,
to vawlt
both exercises of Pike and muskett
the geography and mathematiques.

Every body furnisheth himself of every necessary things in their chambers.
Them that will learn latin might have a master att his own charges att twenty shellings a month."

English grammar was not, apparently, amongst the subjects thought worthy of study.

This education might have attracted a hunting squire for his boys, but it was not the kind that Sir John desired for Ralph; he was sent to a less pretentious but more practical Dame's School.

27 Jan.
1695.

Ralph Palmer, junior, to Mr. Ralph Verney, at Mrs. Moreland's Boarding School in Hackney, with a Parcell. These:

"Dear Nephew,—You give your friends such extraordinary hopes of your making a fine Gentleman, as well by your early Inclinations to goodness, as your industrious progress in Learning (for both have an equal share in the Constitution), that you deserve the greatest encouragement. The Books I here send you I desire you to accept as a pledge of my affections, they are the Works of the Author of the *Hole Duty of Man*. I need not desire you to read them, because I know you will make the best Use of them, and when I see you next I will furnish your closet with some books of another kind that may be serviceable to you in the way of your Studys, and I doubt not but in due time you will be very Ornamental to your family, as well as truly Serviceable to your Selfe & Country; which are the hearty wishes of your most affectionate Uncle,
R. PALMER."

The subject of these hopes was in his thirteenth year. Mrs. Moreland must have been a remarkable Dame, for he was still at her school at the age of 16, and was entered the next year at Merton College, Oxford.

5 July
1699.

Mrs. Alice Palmer to Ralph Verney, Esq., at Mrs. Moreland's School in Hackney

"Dear Child,—I begin now to think the time long since I heard how you doe; this hot weather & frute being now in season, without a prudent care, makes many people sick, but I hope the same overseing eye of Providence will preserve you as has hitherto, and I hope for some great good end. . . . I would gladly have you here at Barthollomewtide, but I am satisfied you are to be whare you will fare better, & my prayers atend you everywhere. . . . I charge you let me hear how you dowe sometimes; it will be a pleasure as well as a Comfort to Your ever loving & indulgent Grandmother."

2 Aug.
1699.

Ralph Palmer, from Little Chelsea, to Sir J. V.

" . . . We lately hard from Master, by a letter from him, who is very well, & is mightily improved in writing; we thought to a had

him at Barthollomewtide, but he saies he is for Claydon, which contents us."

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

2 Aug.
1700.

"This day Mr. Jos. Churchill was so kind as to bring me Deer Sir John's leter & the welcome newes of your good health. . . . I hope you are well returned from Oxford & have found A Colledge & tutor to your mind for my Nephew Verney."

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

9 Aug.
1700.

"Sir,—I am sory my Lady is not to stay longer in Oxford to see severall pleasant sights ther. I hope my nevegh will In Joy his helth & gaine all thos advantages you propos for him. I know *The Colledge* very well, it was the Queen's Court as much as Christ Church. I have spent many houres In & amonst her Ladys."

It is startling to realize the length of this old lady's memory. Cary Verney was the fourth daughter of Sir Edmund Verney, Knight Marshal to Charles I. She was married at fifteen, before the outbreak of the Civil War, and when both her father and her husband, Sir Thomas Gardiner, had been killed in the King's service, she lived with his family at Cuddesdon, eight miles from Oxford, a widow still in her teens. When the King made his headquarters at Oxford, it was natural that the young Royalist widow should frequent the Court of Henrietta Maria and her ladies in Merton College—some 56 years before her great-nephew went up there, and recalled the old days to her mind. Merton College had again in more recent days given lodging to a Queen, within the memory of the older Dons. In October 1680, when the fourth Parliament of Charles II. met, the Whig member for Chester, Sir William Williams, of Jesus College and Gray's Inn, was elected Speaker—the first Welshman to have that honour. The King dismissed them again in a few weeks, and summoned the next Parliament to meet at Oxford, when the same Speaker was re-elected. Charles II. was lodged at Christ Church, and Catherine of Braganza at Merton College.

It was the last Parliament of the reign, and members were only allowed to sit for a week. All this was very recent history when Ralph Verney went up to Merton; although the political world, in barely twenty years, had been turned upside down. The Speaker, Sir William Williams, who had gone back to the Bar after his very

short reign, died in 1700, the very year in which Ralph matriculated on the 12th of October, aged 16.

Richard Lydall was Warden of Merton from 1693 to 1704: when he was first proposed he was considered too young, and when there was another vacancy he was thought by many to be too old at 73; but he went on as the Warden during Ralph's time in Oxford. He is not mentioned in the letters; Ralph's tutor, Mr. Holland, seems to have been his chief friend. Lydall has a monument in the South Transept of the College Chapel.

Ralph Palmer writes to his nephew during his first term at College:

29 Oct.
1700.

"... I am extreamly pleased to hear under your own hand that you like the University and your College so well, as you express you do, and though you are debar'd the advantages of a Common Room [which really are very great], yet there is choice of Worthy Men, I doubt not, for your Conversation, and I question not in the least your Judgment and Information to single such out for that purpose, tho' the worse are always most apt to court your acquaintance, which you will easily distinguish, I hope for your own Good & the comfort of those that Love you. I have heard so much of my Nephew Ernle of New College that I cannot but tell you he is highly worth your acquaintance, which if ever you gain pray present him my hearty service."

As far as appears in the letters, Ralph Verney is rather a colourless character. He was not strong in health, but this was the only anxiety he ever caused his father, with whom he was on the best of terms. There is a complete absence of the exhortations to work harder which Sir John's elder brother used to address to his undergraduate son at Trinity College, Oxford; so Ralph apparently did all that was expected of him.

He was almost the only member of his family who showed any liking for books; Sir Thomas Cave, whose tastes were entirely out of doors, seemed to think that Addison's Poems "might prove a diversion to employ your empty hours". This, we must hope, was the result of his time at Oxford. Who was reading books in this great age of English literature? Not apparently the country gentlemen, except a few plays, pamphlets, and books of devotion. A few years later a well-known bookseller, Collins, at the sign of the Cross, becomes bankrupt, and Mr. Vickers laments that if he had had Lord Fermanagh's purse at the Golden Bottle, and bought more books, "he might have holden Collins up by the chin".



Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Sir John Verney.

In the first edition of Milton's Poems, published in 1645, "the stationer disclaims any private respect of gain, for the slightest pamphlet is nowadays more vendible than the works of learnedest men". There are but few letters from his College friends; among them was James Cholmeley of Easton Hall, Lincolnshire. His father Montague Cholmeley's death is mentioned in the letter of another friend, Mr. Morland. Mr. Cholmeley's friends were anxious to prevent or defer his marriage with Catherine Woodfine.

Elizabeth Verney to Ralph Verney, at Merton College

2 Oct.
1702.

"Dear Brother,—We being informed that your friend Mr. Cholmeley is still at Mrs. Woodfine's, & that tis likely to be a match, my father thinks it proper you should let Mr. Holland know that if he pleases he may acquaint his friends, who no doubt will take care to prevent it when they know the designe; but not take any notice to him that you heard anything from my father, but as from yourself. I have no more news to tell you, so will trouble you no further then to assure you that I am in all sincerity, Your most affect. Sister,

ELIZABETH VERNEY.

My Father & Mother send ther Blesing to you & my sisters thare love & service."

Before the end of the year Sir John writes:

"... Wee have little here but what's in the Prints, onley Mr. Chumley is married to Kitty Woodfine."

26 Dec.
1702.

There is a receipt from Edmund Denton for £20 paid by Ralph Verney for his friend Mr. Cholmeley, as part payment for a grey horse.

1 Oct.
1702.

There was a connection between this family and Jane Austen; her mother's only brother, Mr. Leigh Perrot, married a niece of Sir Montague Cholmeley of Lincolnshire about 1790.

B. Morland to Ralph Verney, at Merton College

10 May
1701.

"Deare Mr. Verney,—I had your kind letter by Mr. Tufnaile, but he had kept it a good while before he gave it mee . . . he is very much improved in his Studies, which I am very glad to see. I was designing you a visit last Easter, but it is put off by Mr. Cholmeleys death. We hope to be with you before it be long. His father had designed Mr. James for Pembroke College, so I believe his guardian will have him go thither. Pray when you see Mr. Geo. Hadley tell him we are coming to him, God willing, this summer. My humble service to Sir John Verney when you see him.—I am, Sir, your most affectionate servant,

B. MORLAND."

8 Mar.
1703.

John Holland, of Merton College, to Ralph Verney

"Dear Sir,—I received the Oysters which you sent to the Societi, they were very good and they returne ther Acknowledgments to you for them. I received the nues of your Sister's marriage with great satisfaction, because I hear that the Gentleman to whom she is now so nearly allied is a Person of Good Manners and a very fair Estat. I congratulate Sir John, my Lady, yourselfe and sisters upon this marriage, and I hartily wish Mrs. Margaret many yeares of Joy and Happiness."

Adolphus Oughton, another undergraduate, distinguished himself (as will appear later) as a soldier. A Mr. Hadley is also mentioned. Ralph brought his undergraduate friends to Claydon, and on one occasion when Lord Fermanagh was away from home, his wife was very glad of the company of Ralph and some of his college friends when the park was attacked by deer-stealers. Their tutor, Mr. Holland, kept up his friendship with the Verneys in after-years.

Samuel Tufnell became a life-long friend of Ralph's. The Tufnells or Tufnailes, as it was anciently spelt, were a family with property at Moken Hadley, Middlesex, and at Langleys in Essex. Samuel was the son of John Tufnaile and of his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Alderman Sir William Joliffe—a name which continued as a Christian name in the Tufnell family.

Samuel had succeeded his father in 1699, but being then probably a minor, he was sent to Merton College, and was afterwards called to the Bar.

When in 1708 Ralph married Catherine Paschall, they became Essex neighbours, and corresponded about county affairs. They were colleagues in the Parliaments of the two first Georges; Tufnell, with his traditional experiences in the City, was made a Commissioner for Settling Commerce—which sounds a large task. He was member for Malden in 1727, for Colchester in 1728, and for Great Marlow in 1741.

He seems to have kept house at first with his sisters, but he was married later to Elizabeth Cressener and had several children.

24 May
1701.

Samuel Tufnell to Ralph Verney, at Merton College

"Dear Sir,—I just now recd. your letter, & as for what you mention concerning the gown, desire you would give yourselfe no Further trouble about it; I am very well satisfied where it is, if you

can excuse so indifferent an offer. Yesterday I din'd in Southamton Square, where I found all the Ladys were well; Sir John had been very much troubled with the Stone all the morning, but by noon was perfectly recover'd; my Lady was very much afraid the Postilion would have the Smalpox, which if it prov'd to be, design'd for Claydon immediately. The Temple begins to be somewhat more agreeable to me than at first it was, the Commons I think are little better than at Oxford. I wish you would entertain such kind thoughts as of coming to London this Spring where your Company would be acceptacle to all your friends, to non more than to your affecte. Friend,

SAMLL. TUFNAILE.

Pray give my service to Mr. Hadley."

They continued to correspond in later years.

Samuel Tufnell, from London, to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

14 Aug.
1710.

"Dear Sir,—I can't as yet send you an exact account of the alterations made at Court. St. John I hear is Secretary of State in the room of Boyle. Harley, Ld. Pawlet and Mansell are of the Privy Councill. Tis said Ld. Rivers is gone to Hannova to desire the Elector to accept the command of the Army. Next Monday we shall sett out for Tunbridge. I think to take that young man that offered his service to you t'other day upon the same termes. Pray give Tom directions to find him out that he may come up to London as soon as possible, and hurry Tom away that he mayn't stay to play at Baddow. I have some inclination to take John Marshall, if you part with him at Michs., but would not have him think I'm so fond of his Service as to send for him; if you please you may give him to understand I shall want one to do my Wiggess and lay Cloth etc., that he may offer his Servis if he thinks fitt. The other I find will be usefull to look after my Saddle Horses in the Country. My servis to your Ladies and Mr. Pascall.—I am, Dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

SAML. TUFNELL."

"Dear Sir,—I have now gott to Tunbridge with my sisters. . . . I think to be in Essex as soon as I hear the harvest is over there, designing to employ some men about clearing the Brook, therefore desire you'll be so kind as to give me notice when will be the most proper time to begin to work. Here's a great deal of Company att present, and tho' I'm very well entertained, should be much better pleas'd in Essex."

27 Aug.
1710.

Adolphus Oughton to the Honble. Ralph Verney

26 Oct.
1703.

"Dear Sir,—I have, pursuant to your Desire and my own promise, made it my business almost ever since I came to town, to procure

you Mr. Dryden's poem of Absalom and Achitophel, which I have att length, but with a very great deal of difficulty, effected. I have also sent you down with it a new Pamphlet which came out this day, as also the Song of Polly Rogers, and two more the latest that were printed; the Subjects of these papers are so very different that I doubt not but they will afford you variety of diversion, sufficient I hope to detain you awhile the destruction of the Planes, amongst which I understand you have made a great slaughter since I left you; I hope they will not be all destroyed before I come to you, which I now long to doe. As for my watch, I have used my utmost endeavour to regain it, but find it absolutely impracticable, it having passed through severall hands since mine, otherwise you should not have failed to have received it from yours to command,
A. OUGHTON."

Among Ralph's Oxford friends, though older than himself, were the two Nicholas brothers, for whom he obtained leave from Lord Abingdon to shoot in his woods. Later on, Lady Abdy was anxious to obtain the same favour for Sir Robert Abdy, "hee being now at Oxford and in great want of a place to Shoot in". She sends a message by Aunt Adams to Lord Fermanagh. He replies:

26 Nov.
1705.

"If I had any opportunity of seeing Lord Abindon I'd be sure to entreat that favour of him; but the season may be out for that recreation before I see him. I hear he has a House in Oxford, soe that if Sir Robert Abdy will ask his leave I'm confident he is a person of that Civility that he will not deny your Son, but he must not shoot any of the White Pheasants in his Lordshipp's Woods."

25 June
1703.

John Holland, Merton College, to Ralph Verney, at Mr. Cheret's, at the Queen's Head, in James Street, Covent Garden

"Dear Sir,—Had I known where to have directed a Letter to you in London I should not have deferred till this to send my congratulations to my Lord Fermanagh and you upon the honour which the Queen hath conferred upon your family. I wish that this may be an Earnest of Her Majestie's future regards."

12 June
1704.

Ralph Palmer, junr., to Ralph Verney

"Dear Nephew,—Yours had not been so long unanswered, but that I waited for something that might be acceptable and diverting to you, which now offering itself makes me close with this seasonable opportunity, having nothing of news to send:

The Powers of Europe engaged All at All.

France aims at All.

Spain expects All.

Portugal helps All.

Italy suffers All.

The Emperor ventures All.

The Empire neglects All.

The Palatinate sacrifices All.

Bavaria shams All.

The Pope winks at All.

Savoy stakes All.

England and Holland pays for All.

Denmark trades with All.

Sweden gets nothing at All.

Poland looses All.

Cologne has lost All.

Mantua hopes to redeem All—but

Tis believed will get nothing at All.

God overrules All,

Or else the Devil would overrun us All."

Daniel Baker to the Hon. Ralph Verney, at Middle Claydon

19 May
1704.

"Sir,— . . . I have a request of you that you would be pleased to write to Mr. Holland, your Quondam Tutor, to appear in the behalf of one Mr. John Yate, who is a Batchelor of Arts of Lincoln College, and designs to stand a Candidate for a Fellowship of Merton; where there will be so I hear shortly an Election of Fellows, and we have made some considerable progress therein; so that Mr. Holland (if he be not engaged, and your Intrest in him can but fix him), he will be back'd by severall others, and do hope by his means to obtain the point, especially if he will also endeavour to gett others for him. Truly were not the Young Gentleman Orthodox, and deserving in every respect, both as to Sobriety, Learning, and Zealous for the Church of England, I would not have wrote you this letter about him. . . . My wife joins with me in her service to you and Mrs. Verney.—Your obliged and humble servant,

DANIEL BAKER."

Ralph Verney replies: "Sir,—I am sorry tis not in my power May
to be serviceable to your friend Mr. Yate; there being so many of 1704.
Merton College, and some of 'Em I believe Mr. Holland's pupils (from whom I've received great civilytys), which design to stand Candidates for the Fellowships when there is an Election, that I think it would be not only rude but likewise ungratefull in me to make an Interest for one of another College."

27 Apr.
1704.

Adolphus Oughton to Ralph Verney

"Dear Sir,—Almost ever since my coming to this great town I have bin so employed with my Guardian's executor that I have not had time to write. If you will favour me with a line at the Lyon and Lamb, in James Street, Covent Garden, it would come safe to me. The want of both time and intelligence prevents me from troubling you with any news, only this—that Sir Tho. begins to talk very hotly of having this place, which I am very glad to hear; Lady Fermanagh yesterday relapsed almost as bad as ever. I have no more to add but that Mr. Cheret is very much a rogue as certainly as that I am your very humble servant. My Humble service to Mrs. Verney" [his sister Elizabeth].

Ralph's home was much enlivened by the marriages of his sisters Mary and Margaret in 1703. His brothers-in-law brought fresh brightness into the family life, which his father's constant ill-health must have tended to depress. Margaret's husband, Sir Thomas Cave, a thoroughly keen sportsman, encouraged Ralph to hunt and shoot and dance; he treated him always with the affection of an elder brother—there was only a difference of some three years between them.

After leaving Merton, Ralph was more or less studying Law. He had an address of imposing length:

"In Barbon's Building, up the steps and one pair of Stairs, number 8 over the Door, by the Water Gate in the Middle Temple, London. To be thrust under the Door if shut."

After his illness, which occasioned a journey to the Bath in 1705, his uncle, the lawyer, is anxious about his health.

30 June
1705.

Ralph Palmer, junr., to Ralph Verney

"... It comes into my mind that the Air of the Temple (which is the best in London), may best agree with you; if you think so, my Chambers are at your service, where your man may be with you. I hope you'll bring your horses with you, for riding of all things is what's proper in your case, and then we may often take a ride together."

7 Apr.
1706.

"... Yesterday I was a Hunting Buck on Putney Heath, with the Queen's Buckhounds. There was a great appearance of Gentlemen tho' a bad day, they did not turn out before 1 a clock, so we had a fair riding and good tho' short sport."

Ralph Palmer expresses his wishes to Lord Fermanagh that his nephew Ralph

"might spend one half of the year in London, where he might find a good and improving Acquaintance in the world, and accomplish himself by the usefull additions of a little French, Fencing &c., as well as be in the way more of a happy marriage, to your Contents and satisfaction." 22 Oct. 1706.

Perhaps, after all, Ralph had missed something that the "Academy" might have given him.

". . . My Nephew Verney is pleased to accept of my apartment in the Temple, where he shall not want any assistance I can give him, for my Dear Sister's sake (whose memory is Sacred with me), the Respect I have for your Lordship, and his Personal Merit. He has begun to learn French, and I was with him most of last Week, which gave me an opportunity of introducing him into some of my acquaintance, besides which he has some sober young gentlemen of his own in those parts. . . . Your neighbour Mr. Lowndes proposed (in the H. of C.) a project upon Hides and Tallow, but was buz'd by the Landed Men into his Seat & Silence." 11 Feb. 1706.

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney, at the Middle Temple

". . . We heartily wished You amongst us the other night at my Chambers, where your Sister Cave, Sir Thom., Mrs. Cave and Mrs. Adams, and my she-friends &c., to the number of a score, assembled to hear some of the Opera of Arsinoë & Camilla Songs performed; wherelike Mr. Hadley, his son, Lady, and Daughters & Sergt. Cheshire, were too." 19 Nov. 1706.

Addison, in the *Spectator* (vol. i. No. 18), mentions "Arsinoë" as the first Italian opera given in England—he deplores that English people can sit like an audience of foreigners in their own country, to hear plays acted before them in a tongue they do not understand. He speaks with equal disfavour of the translation into English "of the famous Songs in Camilla", in which the words and the music are entirely discordant, "but so the music be French or Italian it becomes the fashion, and our English music is quite rooted out".

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney

"On Monday at 5 o'clock there will be a French Opera performed at Mrs. Chauvin's Boarding School in Great Chelsea by young Ladies, there will be extraordinary Dancing, and something very Curious, as well as Good Music and a Theatre raised. I have seen it once, and 'twas very diverting. We will meet you at the 29 Mar. 1707.

Park Gate by Buckingham House at 4 a'clock unless you walk over in the morning, 'twill not be over till 9 a'clock so that if you have no Convenience of Returning, and will Favour us with your Company home, my Sister's bed is vacant and at your service. My wife and I shall see it."

In April 1708 Ralph's devoted grandmother was very ill. She lingered on for some months.

14 Sept.
1708.

Ralph Palmer to Lord F., from Chelsea

"This comes from an afflicted hand to acquaint you with the great loss of my Dear Mother, whom my Nephew Verney came just time enough to see before she died, in the 75th. year of her age, but she was not so sensible as to know everybody then, for she was very ill but in no great pain, and departed very quietly. My poor father is greatly grieved for her and she will be dearly miss'd in our family, tho' she is much the happier by it."

His grandmother's home had always been open to Ralph, with a most loving welcome; but by this time he was a married man, and looking forward to having children of his own.

CHAPTER VII

THE PASSING OF KING WILLIAM

THE year 1701, the last of King William's life and reign, had been a troublous time. The King's disposal of the money from the Forfeited Estates in Ireland caused much discontent; the House of Commons was very hostile to him and to his exclusive management of Foreign Affairs, and had also a serious quarrel with the House of Lords.

In the autumn of the year King William's bitterest enemy did for him what his warmest friends could not effect. King James died at St. Germain's, and Louis XIV. proclaimed his son as King James III. of England and James VIII. of Scotland, and received the youth with Royal Honours. The nation was roused to fury at the King of France venturing to dispose of England like a subject province, as he might dispose of Spain. King William's popularity was restored at a blow, and his policy was explained and understood. The war became popular, and Lady Gardiner was sending Sir John in the spring good news of the success of the Allies.

"... Our Lecturear", she writes, "came to tell mee the great good
nues as was just come to London of the honourable stratagem of
Eugene the Emperour's Generall Indeavouring to take Cremona.
Though by the Illnes of the roads Sockors could not come time
enoughf to Asist them in that desin, els they had sartainly taken
the towne. How ever, thay maid A orderly retreat, & took 80
Offisers, & took the great Generall of Franc Vilyroy, & 12 of ther
chif Offisers besids, and 500 prisyners." 26 Feb.
1702.

A General Election had sent to Westminster a more friendly Parliament. While Sir John Verney and his family were mourning their private sorrows, a great calamity was hanging over the nation. The King had long fought against ill-health, sinking all thoughts of his own ailments in his desperate struggle against the power of France.

Archbishop Tillotson, who knew William so intimately, was wont to pray "more particularly for the preservation of His Majesty's sacred person, upon whom so much depends, and who is contented ever to hazard himself to save us". But Tillotson was dead, and already the great deliverance of 1688 seemed long ago—and "the Town" was so accustomed to hear of the King's illnesses that men had ceased to be alarmed, and the final collapse came as a great shock to his friends.

Lady Gardiner had always been amongst the King's enthusiastic admirers—she thoroughly agreed with Defoe's sentiments:

It brought my Hero to my Mind,
William the Glorious, Great, and Good, and Kind:
Short epithets to his just Memory;
The first he was to all the World, the last to me.

There were other people, too, of that opinion; the Grand Jury of Exeter, in the previous autumn, sent up a most loyal address, deprecating "any device to divide this Nation in the reign of the best of Kings, when we have the best House of Commons, except that which brought his majestie to the throne".

10 Mar.
1702.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"... I would not rit by post because I wod not just send you the sad nues of the Death of our great and good King, which was not sodin for he has nevar bin well sinc he put out his collar bone in the fall from his hors which undoubtedly putt him into A Fevour, which hastened his end, bot his dropsey, and the breaking out of his legg, on a sodin the doctor says wod A killed him in fue weekes. Tis sartain the Doctors found his danger great when he sent Commissioners to pas severall Acts in Parlement In Stead of him, A bove a fortnight senc, & as in his helth hee tooock care of the publick, soe hee did all a long in his sicknesse, in adressing many a bought him in stat affaires, and tho' he had those Swounding fits, & was thought to be dead, yet with takeing A vomit hee cam to himselfe, & at A leaven A klok that night Sir Richard Blakmore thought hee might have lived some time. Hee told it to a Divine, as lives in this towne & was better on Saturday till tords night, but att 5 A klok on Sunday morning receved the Sacryment, and then giv orders to have the Parliament meet that day, & to have the Counsell sit in order to prepare for the Queen's Socksestion spedily, and that noe busyness might bee delay'd; And signed two Bills, one was about the oths of Abjuration, bot his hand was forst to be held to set his seal to the Acts. Soe some think ther might be

Cavillings abought itt, the Queen will rectify it. At 5 A klok my Lord Maior had A form of Prayer sent him to disperse all over the Citty, bot by 7 A klok on Sunday morning, it was forbid, finding the King was dyeing, he had his sensis to the Last.

The King has maid his Will and maid many Exsequitors and maid, as is reported, the Electoor of Brandenburg, who is King of Prussia, one of Exsequitors and Princ of Hanyvor Another, and som of the Stats of Holland, and the Duck of Albermarle and more which is not yit named, and that his Will is not to bee opened till some of the Stats of Holland come over. Tis said hee is dead very rich: I hope he has given something to his Queen's servants, as he had given halfe pay to evar [since] she dyed, and given some standing gift to the Ospittalls of wounded Soulgyars. The Queen answered my Lord Maior's speech soe well that shee is highly Aploydid, and for her dicklaration she maid to the Lords of the Privy Councill, which she spok all of it without Booke; now tis said Princ Gorg will goe Generall bot that he must first be Crown'd, becaus the confederat Princis will not be governed by any bot a crowned head. The Parlements adress to the Quen is much approved and the people like of ther new Queen, thinking ther will not soe much of ther mony goe out of England as the King carryed out. Tis now said that the Pring Gorg of Denmark did actions very great in Worr in Denmark, soe you see the rising Sun gains advantage. This I think I have from good hands, if falc, you musst excuse my pen, which if you have not the transactions of our present affaires from some Arthentick hand, I will rit wot I heare weekley."

The very large sums which the Queen's husband subsequently accepted from Parliament made Lady Gardiner's spelling of "Princ Gorg" not inappropriate.

According to the custom of the time the King's body was buried piecemeal; the first portion at Westminster, before the public funeral, "four noblemen accompanying it in a Coach". Lady Gardiner writes:

"... Tis generally reported that the King's body is to be buried Fryday week. Some says not till the Earl of Marlbury [Marlborough] returns out of Hollond, for tis said hee was sent about that errand, the Dutch hoping wee wod make a publick funerall which none I meet with is for it, the Queen's funerall being not yit payd for, and the King dyeing in a great debt to his sarvants which troubles all his friends to heare. I find that both thos as has mony owing to them for the Queen's funerall and the servants has maid it knon to the Queen. . . . Next heare was Mr. Beck with me isterday, who I find is a great mourner for the King; he heares that the Crown

19 Mar.
1702.

Jewels is pawned or gon, which is now A troble to all as heares it, soe hope tis not true, for tho' I rit itt to you will not report soe ill a thing, time will prove the truth. Tis said hee mite as justly pawn Ingland. Some says hee is dead very rich, bot his frinds sayes hee has morgaged his istat in Hollond to carry on this Confederacy which has spent much of the English mony as well as his own. Somers, Hallyfax, & my Lord Orford, and tis said my Lord Portland too, is tornd out of the Counsell; the three fust is sartain, and isterday I was told that my Lord Norris is to have my Lord Wharton's staffe, but due not belive it, for on Monday hee went with your country addres to the Queene, which this day will bee in the Gaset. Major Beck went with him, bot the Queene could not receive it, or wod not till after one A clok, soe hee came away befor it was delivered."

Lord Norris had succeeded his father as Earl of Abingdon in 1699, but Lady Gardiner still speaks of him under his old name.

"Tis said my Lord Portland is to goe to the Emperour from the Queene, to let him know shee will make good all those Alyances the King maide, and is to retorn by Princ Hanyvors Court, and tis hotly reported that Scotland is redy to rebell. The Queene has commanded my Lord Quensbery and other Scotch Lords to goe for Scotland; ther message we know not, bot tis sartain the French has long bin tempting them to rebell, and the fanaticall party here wod be glad of it. You know the Scots has bin driveing an Interest to bee more neerely united to Ingland, bot tis only the fanatycall party is for it, for should thay obtain to have ther Lords & Gentlemen sitt in both our Houses of Parliament the Church of Ingland wod sune sink; the Oath Abjuration troubles many, bot ther is time given till Trynyty term to have it taken or refused, and tis hoped the Queen and parlamant in that time will think fitt to mitygate itt. Severall great Jacobits declare they will spend ther lives for the Queene now King James is dead, bot thos as belives the pritended Princ of Wals to bee the Son of the King will not come in."

17 Mar.
1702.

In contrast to Lady Gardiner's detailed accounts, the old Squire Ralph Palmer only remarks, "As to publick afares, I trust we may be happy in our new alteration in time; I have nothing more besides our blessings".

Mrs. Adams, who would have been horrified to be called a Jacobite, reports the other side of the question in a more fashionable part of the town:

21 Mar.
1702.

"I defried writing the beginning of this weeck to Dear Sir John, and all the rest of my Acquentanc, becos I love not to be the

messenger of ill nues to aney one, I thout the Death of the King wud fly fast enuf without the help of my pen. Here is nues plenty, bot whot one tells me, the next companey contreydicks, so I know not which to writ, bot I am asuereid of one thing, that noe King can bee less lamentid then this has bin, evin by thos that was his greitest admierers in his life tiem. I due not mean thos that has lost ther plasis & ther other profit consarnes; the very day hee dieid, ther was severall expresions of Joy publickley spokn in the strets —of having one of ther own nation to rain over them; and that now thay shoud not have ther mony carryed bee yon say to in rich other nasions, bot it would be spent Amonx them, and tradin wud be beter. I had all most forgot to tell you that my Cosan Ursley Stewekley was observd to be as Mery the day her Deare King dieid as shee youseid, and told my Cos Nicklas that greef did not hinder her from plaing at Cards the next day. It is said the Queen will be crouneid the next month, and now wimen's governments is cum in fasion it will be my Lady's folt if she cums not to touen when she plesis, for I know you are wiling to folow all good fasions."

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

26 Mar.
1702.

"Sir,—I must rit as things coms Into my head, which is tis said my Lord Rochester is sent debuty into Iorland becaus the Privy Councell wud not like him here. Hee having bin in the high Com-muncion Cort in King Jamsis time, & for other things of that nature. Tis said Lord Clarendon shall have prefarment, & has taken the oths, but Lady Beling [Billing] being sick and layd to rest, my maid could not know the truth of it. Lord Peterborough is to continew Admirall, and Admirall Rooke, as maryed my Cosan Cotterill's daughter, is to goe chife for him, my Lord being noe Seaman; Admirall Elmer is being the man as was just in when Mr. Churchill was torned out by Queen Mary's order to my Lord Orford, that Quene thinking him not for her Interest, maks this present Quene torn out Elmer and put in Churchill, which is thought but just; Churchill being at that time the Eldest Captaine and as good a Seaman, ought to have bin fust made Admirall.

I heare nothing more of the King's Will, bot in the Gaset find the King of Prussia lays claim to what the King has given him in Holland bot how much it is I know not. By the Gaset at this Juncture of time tis said now the King dyed very poor and soe left England poor. The Parlement has given the Queen the six hundred thousand pound a yeare, as the King had, for her revenew. Tis all in the Doble Gaset, how will Afares in Hollond goe on, and doubt not all other of the Alyes will be glad to joyn with us. . . . The Crowna-tion is to bee 29th of May, looking on that day to bee the happiest day Ingland has had many yeares. Bot many forgets the deliveranc

wee had from Popery and Slavery by our last great King. God make all more constant to our present Quene, and grant her very long to rain, and make these Kingdoms hapy."

11 Mar.
1702.

Sir J. V. to Mrs. Vickers

"Deare Cousin,—I am much concern'd at the great loss which all Engld. hath lately had by the Death of K. William, and I hartily pray to God to make it up in her Maj. by a long and happy reign."

28 May
1702.

"As for the nues of the toun," Aunt Adams writes, "I heare ther is 5 nue Dukes to be maid, the Marquis of Normanby, the Lord Rochester, my Lord Marlborough and the Lord Rutland and my Lord Chesterfield. The Lord Godolphin is to be made a Marquis, & Sir Benjamin Bathurst an Earle. And now I'll troubell you with non mor of my scribill, onely that Mrs. Draper is married to Mr. Ashurst, & that Pegg & I are all your humbell servants."

9 Apr.
1702.

"... I was in hops to have seen my Lady Verney in toun, befor this time, in order that all the rest of you to folow, the toun fills A pas, and all the best logins will be quickly tacken up. The Coronation is to be this day fortnit, but the King is not beried yet, nor it is not sertinly knon when he will, bot most sayes hee will be on Tuesday Next."

The 29th of May, the day originally proposed for the Coronation, was a Stuart Festival—King Charles II. in the Oak at Boscobel—but it was held a month earlier, on the 23rd of April, St. George's Day, a date which appealed to the whole nation.

Sir John and his family seem to have gone to Town for the Coronation. He writes to Mr. William Hill:

17 May
1702.

"London is very chargeable to a great family which I have here. I shall be glad to have a line directed to me at Mr. Cheret's, at the Queen's Head in James Street in Covent Garden."

During their stay Lord Cheyne writes to Sir J. V.:

"Knoweing that my Cossen Verney and his sisters love musick, I have here enclosed two tickets which I beg your acceptance of."

4 July
1702.

Thomas Cheret to Sir J. V.

"I cannot easily tell how uneasy wee all are sinc your absence—Our Coffe and Bread and Butter goes downe like Chopt Hay. Its a pittty your ladies did not stay a day longer in toune, they wod a bin Entertained with a battle betwene a blackmoore Lady and a fine beau, which was very commicall."

Mr. Cheret "drinks Sir J. V.'s health in Royall Punch, & hopes to visit him at Claydon".

Sir J. V. to Ben Timme, Secretary of the Hospital, Bridewell

7 July
1702.

"Sir,—I recd. yours of the 3rd., by it I see the honour which the Wrshippl. President of the Hospitall, Sir Robt. Jefferys, and the rest of the Governors wod do me; but some yeares sinc I intreated your predecessors to rase my name from amongst the Governors, being through a long sicknes disabled from serving that good Society, and from that time I have never been at any of their Courts, presuming twas done. Therefore I give my humble thanks to the President etcetera, and desire them to supply my place (and leave me out) by some fitter person then myselfe, who am aged and sickly.—I rest your hu. servt., J. V."

Queen Anne and her husband, more especially her husband (following the verdict of Charles II.), were set down as hopelessly stupid. Sir Charles Oman, in his lively *History of England*, describes her as a

"worthy pious woman, of simple domestic tastes, without a spark of intelligence or ambition. . . . Her husband Prince George of Denmark was a fit match for her; he was reckoned the most harmless and most stupid man within the four seas. . . . He and his good-natured, placid, lymphatic spouse might possibly have managed a farm, it seemed almost ludicrous to see them set to manage three kingdoms."

Nevertheless, there was much to attract even the Whig matrons, like Lady Gardiner, in the prospect of Anne's succession. Since the death of the much-loved Queen Mary, the Court had been seven years without the gracious presence of a Lady, and when the Princess Anne had attempted to revive some social gatherings by giving a weekly ball at Whitehall, it was known that King William had disapproved the display of fine clothes and rich jewels, thinking that all available money should be spent on the army. Queen Anne had all the virtues dear to English homes; the loss of her boy and the more recent loss of her father (for whom she alone wore mourning, though the Court was forbidden to do so) reminded the nation of all she had suffered as a daughter, a sister, a mother and a friend; for the imperious temper of "Mrs. Freeman" was even then well known.

It seemed at first as if the passing of King William meant also the passing of his policy, but it was only partly so, for the Queen

and the Parliament at once declared in favour of the Protestant succession, and of continuing the war against France with our Allies.

Mr. A. S. Turberville, in his *History of the House of Lords in the Eighteenth Century*, writes thus of Anne at the beginning of her reign:

"The view that she was a nonentity, a mere figurehead, counting for little and taking part in no politics, which has been current since her own day, was certainly not held and certainly not acted upon by the Queen herself."

Her main interest was in Church affairs; she distrusted Toleration, and cared as much to keep the patronage of the Church of England in her own hands as Queen Victoria cared for the control of foreign politics. Anne was crowned by the Primate Tenison, but her favour and friendship were withdrawn from him and bestowed on Sharpe, the Archbishop of York, whom she held to be less friendly to "fanaticks".

9 July
1702.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"... Lady Rossell rit to mee, to let me know Lady Bedford was brought Abed of a daughter the day befor, and of my Lord Harington being Invited into Yorkshir to stand for that Shir in the rome of my Lord Erwin [Viscount Irvine of Temple Newsom] who dyed lately. The Duck of Beaufort is gon down to my Lord Dorset's house in Kent to marry Lady Mary Sackville; hee is bot 17 yeares old, and shee 14 yeares old. Lady Northamton and Dochess of Ormond is likewise gon, and this day I ges is thought the wedding day, the Bishshop of London gos to marry them. . . . I joyn with you in praying for the good Socksis of our forsis at sea and Land and likewyse for a hapy end of the trobles in Scotland."

16 July
1702.

"... The Queen has pleased not only the Citty but all good men in making Lord Pembarooock Lord President, hee being very hapy in the carracter the world gives him. The noys of the town is against one Munday [Munden] that had his squadron meet with the Spanish Fleet, some says it was a French Fleet but concluds Munday might have taken them; soe this day is to be tryed for his Life. Wee are still betrayed, tis believed the Parlement hastens to meet to provide for an early Campaigne next yeare. The Duck of Ormond's fleet is at Torbay, the winds not favouring ther proceeding in their voyage. I wish the Citty may due good things, and that Scotland may not rebell, tis thought ther poverty may quiet them

and that the French cannot assist them. Tis cryed sham att the puting Ranalahs in such a place."

[The Earl of Ranelagh was Paymaster of the Army under William III. He was an Irish Peer and an M.P.; he was very unpopular with the Tories.]

"I find Mr. Beck is much altered, bot unhappy marigys ruins all famyls. Pray give my humble sarvis to my Lady and all my neeses and to Collonell Lovet if with you.

P.S. Gorg Donnington is parted from his lady, who is called about the town Temple Donnington."

"... My Cousin D. is not soe parted from his wife but that one house still holds them, bot all think thay will quickly part housis; it makes A great noys in covent Garden where he lives, being thus out of all publick Impliment, which I am sory for, nevar heareing an ill thing hee did when In Impliment, and he once duing a gentill kindnesse to my sister and mee maks mee wish him well. I heare of your changis of all men for Assisis, and you will find by the nues boock Lord Whorton is put out of all County offisis of being wordon; and if you know it not all redy, I can tell you that the Bishshop of Ely has married his son to Mr. Fountain's daughter, as maryed Nanny Chester, that fine woman as lived at my Cossan Nicklasis, and has given her £5,000 and tis said that the Bishshop had settled on his son in Present and in Revartion after him and his lady to the vallew of £20,000, a great sum but its cuming from the son's wife's family, for the Bishshop wod not be thought soe rich. I have this day rit to give him Joy of the Maryage of his son, hee is not in toune, soe shall not know whot shee will own. The Bishshop of Lichfield is maryed to my Lady Lea, widdow to Sir Charls Lea, a beter natured good man I nevar hard of, and A very handsome man.

21 July
1702.

The nues bookes can tell you the great and sad defeat the Garmons has had; and my Lord Maulborgh thought hee had good advantages to have fought the French; so he desiard that the Duch soulgyars that ware not under the English pay, wod only bee redy to help him In case he was worsted, which hee did not feare hee would bee. Bot the Stats Generall said hee had no commition from his Mr. to doe soe, and soe wod not due it, by which wee missed the good opportunity they had to fight the French. So now it apears the miss we have of King William who had command of all, and need not ask live to fight when he saw fit. So tis concluded the Duch will only defend us from being hort, but not doe us good; which is the common polycys of Princis is to lett non grow great, and tis said the King of Sweden is govorned by the French who has his Imbassadore goes in the King of Sweden's camp with him, and thet

the design is to make the Princ of Conty King of Poland, and to cast off the King of Sweden when hee has done the King of Francis work, to hinder Poland from Asisting the Emperor. . . . I desine for London one day next week if poore Peg Gardiner's illness dus not hindar mee which gros wors; for now her grones are allmost Equall to her crying, which pearsis all hearts as sees or heares her. Wee giv her A bundanc of comfortable things which has littell socksess, and truely sometimes wee think shee cannot live many dayes."

18 Aug.
1702.

Mr. Thomas Cheret to Sir J. V.

"Sir,—I am so much out of charity with my ill-fortune that I believe I shall never forgive her—since shee has by an unexpected business prevent me the pleasure of kissing your hands at Claydon, at this time. However, tho' I cannot cum, I have sent you by the carrier a doz. of I hope Good companions of your acquaintance from Montepunchano, I hope they will divert you and the faire Ladies with Each of theire Different noses. I hartily wish myselfe with you to heare a Chorus, which would perfect the Desire I have to assure you I am, Sir, yours and all the good Company's most humble servt., THOS. CHERET.

P.S. My Dame; Dykey; Billy; and plaine Harry; joyns with mee in all I have to says."

Monte Pulciano was a fragrant Florentine wine lately come into fashion, as it was reputed to be highly favoured by my Lord Bolingbroke.

25 Aug.
1702.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

". . . Princ Gorg was a honting this day sennight as the towne said hee was dead, and hope hee may live many years; and whot is the better nues, the Queen is helthfuller then ever, and I hope may yett bring us an ayre to this Crown.

No doubt the Garmons has had a very great victory over the French, and A greater then is set down in the printed papers, which In modesty refrine saying too much till A farder Account, bot privat letters sayes mor then the print; that the French Gaset torns all the victories on there side and doubt not bot will give thanks for it, tho' beaten out of the field. Ther is A great Generall lost, Princ Commarcy, who is much lamented, bot so great an action cannot bee obtained without sume great Aloyes. I find the Earle of Maulborough might have had a battell which hee earnestly desiard, if the Dutch would a assisted him in case he wonted help; bot the Dutch ever loved to beseeg towns, rather then fight in the fild.

As to thos two great matches, the Ladys relations will not own

any thing of them, bot whot time may due I cannot Judg, bot ther is two of the Earle of Gainsburg's daughters as the Marquis of Normanby may dispose of; he marrying the Mother, and they are worth £50,000 apiece, & if one dys the other will have A doble porsion. I was on Monday at Southamton House, my Lady [Russell] sending to mee the night before to come and dine with her befor shee went downe to Stratton, and her son with her, and meet my son Thursday last, who told mee the Duck [of Bedford] lost that day I dined ther £1000 at Bouls, which grived mee to heare, and wish it may prove A mistake. Bot tho' I rit this to you will not say soe much to any other, for any hort to that famyly grives my hart, who honnors the Mother, bot good Lady shee knows least of these mattars. Lady Hartinton came in that day I dined ther who gos to Straton with her Mother, bot the Dochess of Somarset waits on the Queen to the Bath, and the Duck. I wish the good Bishshop of London may find good at the Bath, which if not ther, will be spedly . . . my Lady Biling was with mee isterday in her coach and six horsis from Hamsted, where she had bin som months, and sayes ther is no hopes of Queen Catherine's retorn. The Portingalls find the good advantage of £30,000 a yeare, which is very puntually payd them. The death of the Earl of Kent was sad, going very well to bed, bot hee has A son as much transcends him in parts. As I was riting this Sir Humphrey Winch and my Lady cam in to see mee, and hee is strangly recovered of that great complaint as was thought an Aparplexsy, which is a wonder, hee being 80 yeares old, bot hee has had a good cordyall all his time of plenty."

Lady Verney, at Claydon, to Sir J. V., at Bath

25 Aug.
1702.

"My Deare,—I am glad to heare you are got safe to Bath; the first day's Journey was hard both for you and the horsis, but they are come home very well. John lookes ill, and thought he should have died at Bath, for he bled at mouth and nose both very much, and did so againe upon the day after he coame home, so that I don't know what to doe with the fellow; if he holds so bad I beleve I must send him to Aylesbury, to ask the advice of Piddinton and to take something of him as he thinks fitt, but I should be glad to have your openion of it. . . . I have had a letter from Mr. Hollond to invite us to Oxford, the Queen being to dine there, as she goes to Bath. She lyes at Lord Abington's and is to have an entertainement a Thursday at Oxford—in the Theayter will be fine musick and English versis, the Drs. to meet her with there Scarlet Gowns, and others to be pickt out of every Colige to goe as Procktors, and mighty doings there is to bee; but I writt him word that we shall have Company at Claydon, it being our Race-time, therefore I could not accept of his kind invitation, it not being convenient

then to be from home. He sent a messenger a purpose to us, which was very kind. The Queen's coming to Bath I feare will make lodgings scars, and provisions very deare, soe that I feare you will not have so good diet as if the Court had not been there; and I fancie it will putt off my Sister's coming to Bath, but I know nothing of their minds as yet. . . . I have had a letter from Mr. Cheret who has send you a hamper of Montepunchano; I have not unpacked it as yet, but A dozen bottles I think is a noble present. . . . He can't come to Claydon, I think to send him a letter of thanks and to invite his wife down, tho' I believe shee will hardly come down this year." [Lady Verney is consulting with Coleman about killing two Bucks and disposing of the venison.] . . . "I love you to know how things stand; the post stays, so I will only wish you the Lodgings and everything else to your mind, and perfect health that we may have a Joyfull meeting again."

1 Sept.
1702.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

" . . . Mun Denton was heer being neuly cum from Tunbridg and he saies ther is but littell companey ther but Docters, and they are soe maney that he believes sum of them has scars one pasiont apece, but I heare the Bath is so full that ther is scars A lodgin to be had."

7 Sept.
1702.

Lady Verney to Sir J. V.

"My Dearest,—I think this is the hardest Case in the world when I think of the kind invitation I have to Come to Bath is from a Deare Spouse; It is not that I think I shall not have my helth there that keeps me from comeing, but the care of the family; for sinc your leaveing Claydon, I riseing earley and goeing about, doe see such things neglected, and other things wasted, that I could not well leave them. The Cook will be drunk, if I take out Smith and leave the Key with Coleman, and then the Charge of Plaite hee has in his Keeping, I don't think fitt hee should be out. I have been frighted mightily with Deer Stealers last Wendsday about 9 a clock, as they fiered on both sides 8 times, our Keeper don't know but he may have Shott one of them in the Leggs, we have taken one of theire Doggs; as it is a very Large one, of a Greyhoun, and they Swore it should bee the Worst for the Verneys takeing the Dogg away from them, and we never wanted more help, Kemp and Coleman sayes, in our lives then we did now, for thay were very hott on both Sids, bot Woodfine, Chumley and Mr. Verney being here, the House was rased presently; and my care was to keep the Doores Shutt after them, so they Carried nothing off. Mr. Coleman went to Speck with Mr. Lowns, and he seemd at first to be very angrey but Coleman hopes that he can gett the money.

Mr. Sill the Jockey ran Step. Glyn through the thigh, but hee is now pretty well. Mr. Sill's horse won the first day's plait; the horse was put in Sir William Glyn's name, and Sir John Egerton's horse won the Last. Sir E. Denton's Park was robbid of a buck killed, but they went after them so fast that they could not carry off the Buck. Sir E. Denton is much out of order and Dr. Willis thinks hee is in A Consumtion, so hee and my Lady setts out for Bath next Tuesday. The Churchhills, both the old woman and her three daughters, was at the Race in Duncom's old Charit and two poor Cart-horses, and the old man and his son a-horseback both dayes, and more Companey than at Quainton. Mr. Dormer was ther A-Horseback and Lord and Lady Wharton, and Dormer's and some others danced all night at Lady Denton's, wee lay at Mrs. Woodfine's and the Abells dined ther; my Lady Temple presents you her Service to you. I have got a Bar for my Bell Coney [balcony] doores and tinns for the Windowes, so I hope all is safe in other Lodgings. Sir Ed. Denton tells me that he is sure Robin Parrot was one that robbed his Park, and I am very afraid of him for I hear he is a great rake. I thank God, John is much better and had none of that bad Distemper. I sent for Ford, that being near and much less chargeable; I have taken care of the hamper Cheret sent, we have not tasted it nor shall not till thee comest home. I sent him a side of Venison and Smith a haunch and we used the rest ourselves. Mrs. Baker is here and gives her service to you, and the Children their Duties. I can't think of anything more at present, but as soon as I have one Letter, Long till the time coms of having another; and now please myselfe to think it will not be long before I shall see you. . . . My service to Brother and Sister Luttrell, if you want Guineas pray let me know in the next. Sir E. Denton has bought the horse that ran the last day for 24 Guineas and will run him I believe at Woodstock."

"My Deare Sole,— . . . I am glad that Mr. Verney came safe to Bath, I hope he will have some diversion there before he leaves the place. I have the Collick very much and Mrs. Woodfine has given me a water for it, and I hope it may do me good. I was at Brackley Race, Mrs. Woodfine would take no deniall, and sent that morning for us, soe we went and she has kept us till today. The Doctor Townsend pricht, but it was a dull sermon; Mr. Mackworth won the first day's Plaite and the second day's Collonel Mortermor won it, Sir E. Denton's Mare did but just save his distance the last day, and came in third the first day, soe he has no furtune. My Lord Lucas was at Hilsdon, and had a horse run, and Mun had another, but they all three lost, and considering they did not doe fairly I am glad they lost, for ther three horses ran against one Gentellman's horse but to noe purpose. . . . Sir John Conway's

Sept.
1702.

new Coach was there to wate on himself but the Grenvills' cote of Arms was on the Coach as well as his own, and a great many wisht him Joy; I could write you more news but my Stomack acks so that I am not able to write so long a letter as else I should do. Sir Richard Temple has had his house robb'd while he was at Dormer's, of fourscore £'s worth of Plate, and they heare nothing of it as yet. My Deare, I am glad to heare that you have found out the mistake of the letters, but I was very much concerned to think that I who loved thee above all the world should give thee so much troble, for I wod wright night and day before thee should expect a letter to miss out; the children present their duty to you and their love to their brother. Remember me to Mr. Verney and to Mrs. Child."

10 Sept.
1702.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"... I suppose all the solemnytys of the Bath and Bristol is over, and the Compliments as the Cuntry payd the Queen, who I wish may live to make her yearly progresis all over England and find A harty welcom from all her Subjects; we heare shee thinks of goeing to Wails, soe has prorog'd the Parliament to the 20 of October, which I heare the Western Gentillmen has obtained that favour of her. And sartainly it will pleas all the membars of Parliament to stay in the Cuntry as long as they can.

And this excelent good nues of the Duck of Ormond's safe arrival at Cadiz and his being wellcomed ther by the gentry of the Country upon his declaring for the House of Austery . . . and we heare as he passed by Lisbourn ther was great rejoicing, so this sartainly will prove a great blow to the French King, and the King of Sweden's declaration of his adhearing to all the Alys fills the harts of our Citty with Joy, thay was full of it on the Exchange isterday, bot this day we expected it in the Gazet. I only mentioned it to let you know the satissfaction it gives to all the Queen's friends in this part of the world. All mine, except poor miserable Pegg, who I will only name, is a pretty well."

26 Sept.
1702.

Sir J. V. to Mr. Henry Bell, at Aylesbury

"Sir,—I received yours at Bath and I could not well answer it until my return home. Its very true that Mr. Wm. Hill of Weston Turville owed me money, and his son-in-law Mr. Littlepage told me that it should certainly be paid at or before Michaelmas, which is now very near; bot your letter Intimates that Mr. Hill's Widow and yourself desire that I should stay a reasonable time longer for my Money, that she may dispose of land to pay the debts, and that some of her Husband's Creditors are severe. I would not willingly bee rekend amongst that number, neither would I by my forbear-

ance be a looser and other men payd when I be not, therefore I would gladly know whot you mean by a reasonable time, and whether I may expect that I shall be payd at the Expiration of a time to be agreed by us, and on such an assurance I shall readily comply with what you desire."

Sir J. V. to Lady Gardiner

29 Sept.
1702.

"... There is one Mr. Robert Glover, a Marchant; I think he did live at Islington, he was once a Book-Keeper to Mr. Vernon, & since to Sir Basil Firebrass, he is gon off in my debt & I cannot learn whither; if he did live in Islington Parish your Constable or Parish Officers can tell & it may be can inform where to find him, which I gladly would knowe. I'me sure he lived at Islington or Newington."

Sir J. V. to Elizabeth Adams

29 Sept.
1702.

"... I hope both your fair Daughters continue well in Essex, & alsoe the two pretty Mrs. Pascalls; all your nieces here give you their humble services, wherein I alsoe Joyne."

Cary Stewkley to Sir J. V.

3 Oct.
1702.

"Sir,—My Mother presents her sarvice to you, she thanks you for your letter & also for her money. She has bin soe ill with her shortness of breath tho' she has both blistard & bloded yet she finds Little reliefe. A Wednesday Last my mother & my sister Gardiner & my sister Bell was all so Ill, that we could not tell which wod goe fust, but my poor Sister Gardiner fell into so great a fever that we sent for Dr. Nicholas, who said thare was no hopes of her; soe it pleased God that halfe an oure after 4 a klok this morning she dyed."

Lady Gardiner, who had been accused of extravagance in her son's funeral, is trying to make this burying "as chepe and as Prifit [private] as she can, butt the Chargis of the Church comes to near £6, besids the Undertakers Bill".

Cary Stewkley continues:

"Notwithstanding my Mother's great trouble & illnesse as she is in, yett she has gott her Landlord to Inquiar after Mr. Glover, who Lives now at Newington at the Goldern Acoarns, over against the Cros and Crown Alehouse; & he is still Implied by Sir Basil Fierbras, & is reputed A very honest & A able man, soe my Mother hopes that he will pay you honistly. . . . We sent for my sister Viccars who stays till after my sister Gardiner is bered, we all think her in an ill condition of helth. I am in so great a

10 Oct.
1702.

trouble for my Mother, & for my dead sister, that I cannot tell what I rite."

"We are all well—except my poor miserable Peg!" had been a frequent phrase of Lady Gardiner's, and now the lifelong invalid was well at last.

To the outsider, with her dim red-rimmed eyes, her loudly expressed moans and groans, Peg Gardiner was almost a repulsive object, like the grey horse in Childe Roland's vision :

Seldom went such grotesqueness with such woe,
I never saw a brute I hated so;
He must be wicked to deserve such pain.

But that was not the ultimate impression she produced on those who knew her best. Pen Vickers and Katherine Shuckburgh distinguished her with special affection amongst the crowd of her half-sisters; and though there were many sordid circumstances about her death, as there had been about her life, the undertaker being assured that he need only call "at his leisure", there not being enough money in the house to satisfy his claims, yet that cheap and private funeral at Islington meant more of love and regret than many a procession of mourning coaches with all the fashionable millinery of woe.

Mrs. Adams thanks Sir John for her quarterage.

1 Oct.
1702.

"... Last week my Lady Abdy & her two Daughters & Sir Robert & my Pegg went to Baddow Hall to see my Cosan Pascolls. ... I sopus you are provided long sinc with as much colles [coals] as you need ... thos that has money plenty is as unprovided as I that have none, for all hoped to have coals cheper, & now they are dearer, for I have this day tooock in coles at 39s A chaldren, & sum saies thay will be 50s or £3 quickley, which is sad newes to me that have but half my stock in for the winter."

A chaldron is 36 bushels.

Mr. Merwin, the old Winslow solicitor, has been doing business for Sir J. V. in London, and designs to meet him at Birmingham, at Mr. Muskett's at the George Inn.

2 Oct.
1702.

"... Sir Thomas Wynford is dead ... & I should be tomorrow engaged in his Affair, Soe that I know not whether I can attend you taking the Sacramt. on Sunday, but I will send my first Clark without faile, who shall goe with me to the Sessions."

Merwin's law business is not so engrossing that he can miss his Communion in his own Parish Church.

*Thomas Cheret to Sir J. V.*31 Oct.
1702.

"Sir,—I send you the good newes braught this afternoon, by my Lord Shannon, Express from our fleett. The Duck of Ormond & the Admirall having noticed the Galleons & French Fleett was at Vigo, resolved to attack them, in order to which they landed our men, took a battery of 40 Guns, our fleett broake the boombe, wee have burnt & taken all the French, we have taken all the plate, saveing what did belong to the French, they haveing landed itt sum time before. The French Admirall taken prisoner, our Great Shippes are coming home, our forces are masters of the towne, & lays ther till they have farther orders. We have yett noe other pertickulers of our Loss, then Captain Piers & Tallmarsh being killed & Coll. Seymour not mortally wounded, this newes is believed as well. I beg my respects to my Lady & her fair company, my wife & Harry desiars the same.—I am, Sir, your must humble servt.,

THOS. CHERET."

Sir J. V. writes to his aged uncle, Tom Verney, this kind nephew being the only relation who ever wished to hear from him.

"Tis now above 4 months since I have recd any Letter from you, but I hope this long silence hath not been occasioned through sickness. Yet I knowe thet men which arrive to your Age must needs be troubled with sundry Ailments. I assure you that I doe hartily wish you helth and a long continuance of it. Hearin inclosed is a letter for Mr. Deere to desire him at Xmas to pay you your Quarterage and £3 as my gift. . . . My wife & Daughters send you their humble services & I know my Son would doe the like were he at Claydon, but he being at Oxford I make bold to do it on his behalf & subscribe, Sir, your affte. nephew & very humble servt.,

19 Nov.
1702.

J. V.

P.S. Your niece Margaret Gardiner dyed since Michaelmas."

The acknowledgment of this letter is in a very shaky hand.

Lady Gardiner has had a correspondence with the widower, "Nevegh Keelyng", who imagined that her daughter Gardiner had left a great deal of money. She replied that Peg had

"left so littell, that I did not care to name it, but out of whot she had, did give all my five daughters and Nevegh Gardiner and his sister £10 apiece, and many more small Legysies, & that her debts was payd & funerall Chargies, that littell which remained shee gave to mee, & he replied she could not give it better & wisht she coud A made it much more. . . . For my nevegh Gardiner I due think he has that love & respect for mee as not give any distorbance for a £10, for by the other will he had both £20. . . . A wonting man

24 Nov.
1702.

might try for it bot £10 is not worth his charge & troble, so I belive you will find no distorbance; tho' sume is too liberall in talking which I take no notis of.

Lord Kent's Lady dyed soone after my Lord, tho' the Earl of Darby has no son he has a brother, an Army Collonell, a brave & worthy man which Inherits his honnor & fortune. He dyed without will who was givinge with one favouriet daughter £20,000, so how things will goe now I know not. The Earl of Lester, who was pityed for his father's unkind usag to him, is now condemned for givinge away all the furnytüre of Lester House from his son. . . . My daughters went noe further then our Church on the Thanksgiveing Day. . . . Our Parliamēt is hot about the Dissenters, who says that they receve the Sacryment in our Church to make them capabill of placis, shall keep to it & not ever goe to meeting, if they due must quit ther Impliment, bot are finding out a way to keep Princ Gorg in without taking oths, & tis forder said the Queen will desair the Parliamēt to make some Settlements for A Maintenance for the Princ during his Life, & tis believed shee will gaine both thes poynts, bot will keep her word that shee will let the desenters Injiy the Liberty of Contienc tho' not Prefarments. Ther is a great disput betwene the Lords & the Commens about severall things consarning Bishshop Lloyd as was Menister of St. Martins formerally, & is now Almynor to the Queen, who wod torn him out of that Impliment, & saies shee has power to torn out any Sarvant. The Commens in most things complys with the Queen and the Lords oposis her. Ther is great preparations to get men of fedelyty & understanding to see our Galeons opened, & many more Ships of great Prisis."

Bishop Lloyd, much maligned and detested by the Tories, had been one of the seven Bishops sent to the Tower.

The General Election of July 1702 had returned a strong Tory majority to the House.

23 Nov.
1702.

Sir J. V. to Sir Richard Hoare

"Sir,—In the first place I congratulate you on the honr. which her Majtie. hath confereed on you. I knowe you have in all respects long since deserved it, & I'm glad your modesty was obleiged now to accept on't. . . . Pray send me word how my Acct. stands in your Bookes (besids what is in the Excheqr. of mine, my wife's & her Mother's, which is also my wife's), I make it with these two Bank Noates inclosed, about £800. . . . As my Tenants have Oper-tunities at Smithfield Market I shall advise them send up more. . . . When I was in town last month Mr. Arnold told me he had not the order, by reason the Ld. Treasr. was at Newmarket, so that it

was not then signed. When you write to me say on your superscription Winslowe Bagg."

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

5 Dec.
1702.

"Sir,—Not haveing hard from you sinc Nov 17th. makes me give you this trouble. I rit to you of the Parlement takeing into consideration giveing the Princ of Denmark an A Lowanc in case of the Queen's death, which is dreadful to think of. Tis said tis proposed he should have a hondred thousand pound A Yeare, which being bee yound any of our Queen's dowerys, some thinks so much will not be granted. The Queen has put out Bishshop Loyd out of his being Almyner, and in the nues book will find my Lord Marlboro to be a Duck. . . . The weather is very sarching & cold & keeps me in a very Complaining condition, bot old age can ill Incounter the effects of it, espetially one under my sircomstances."

". . . The Bill is like to pass both Houses for the Prince of Denmark to have £100,000 a yeare for his Life to be spent in England, and to have Kensington House & the house that King Charls built at Winchester, which will now be furnished. . . . There is great contentions in both Houses of both Lords & Commons A bout obtaining Liberty to Dissenters, so as to have Prefarments without keeping to our Church, so in all Rains I find that Princis cannot pleas all partys. The Scots Commissionars is retorned homb without makeing one step tords an Anyone with us" [the much desired Union with Scotland].

10 Dec.
1702.

CHAPTER VIII

WEDDING BELLS

IN 1702 "the Children seem suddenly to have grown up", for the letters are filled with proposals and settlements. Lady Gardiner was entirely of Laban's opinion that "It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the older"—and she wrote to Sir John her hopes that her godchild "Betty V." "may lead the way which by birth right shee shod due. My sarvice to your Lady and your four Infants, as you call them, and hope they will all make you a Granfather and mee a great old Aunt". When Sir John lost his election, he quoted the saying that "Kissing comes by favour", and that Favour never seems to have come in Betty's way.

Mistress Molly is the capable daughter in her stepmother's letters; she gives orders to the maids, and sees to the linen and the stores in the troublesome journeys to and from Town; and it was Molly who first had a suitor in "Collonell John Lovett of Iorland". He was related to their friends at Liscombe, and to Mrs. Butterfield, the rector's wife, *née* Lovett; but there was a prejudice against any dependence upon estates in Ireland.

In the spring of the previous year one of the Dentons of Hillesdon had married Mr. Boate, an Irishman, and there had been a great outcry in the family about the marriage, though it proved a happy one in every way, and Mr. Boate became a judge.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

"... On Thursday next my Cosan Boat leaves London & begins her iorney for Ierland, but she takes Oxford & her sister Chamblins [Chamberlain] by the way, bot will stay very few dais in each plas, he being desirous to get to Ierland befor the team. I cannot but be sory she must leave England, for I cannot expect ever to see her againe. I believe she'll be very happy in her husband, he seems

8 Apr.
1701.

to be of a very pleasant and good youmer, & I hear by severall as knows him that his estat is as much as she says for, but for my part I should have had an inglas man with halfe as much rather than have had gon in to Ierland, but she goes very merrily, I wish she may always be so. I am a goeing this afternoon with her to Islinton to take her leave there."

A visit ungraciously received, as Lady Gardiner's letter shows.

"... For great nues I must tell you that my Cousin Boat visited Pen & me isterday, with her great Cronys my sister, & her governess my nees, & made a hard shift to stay neer half an houre, and by her actions & expressions I should have thought her to A bin bred in the North of Ireland; & not but I thought shee nevar wonted wit. Bot tis likely shee thought she showed Enowfgh for her Islinton relations, Indeed I think she had beter never A come; however, when she went away I told her I was in duty bound to wish her hapyness. . . . I rit this to you, I due not care to let others know my thouts in this Afare."

9 Apr.
1701.

Sir John fully shared these prejudices, and being much out of health, and impressed with the pecuniary troubles of the elder ladies of the family, he was resolved not to allow Mary to wed without what he considered adequate settlements. He so effectually worried himself and the prospective bride, that she was ready to give up the marriage.

*Lady Verney to Sir J. V. "at the Bolt & Tun Inn,
in Fleet Street"*

28 Mar.
1702.

"My Deare,—I am in a great Concern about poor Molley; what to advise you in I cant tell, you haveing good Councell ther to lay open your case to." [A long account follows of Colonel Lovett's property and prospects, which Lady Verney thinks far from satisfactory.] "... For my part I am in the Vapors so that I can hardly crall about nor abill to wright much more; I can only pray to God that all things may be for the best. I read your letter to Deare Molley, who leaves it wholly to yourselfe, for she shall not bee in the least Concearn if you break it off; I hope you take of to see all things secure that is promised to your hand. I shall long till I have another letter from you. This minute Molley begs of me to desiar you to break it off, soe you may doe as you please. . . Your loveing & Aff. Wife to command till Death."

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"I thank you for your visit to me when you were in town, tho' Collonell Lovett said not a word to me of his consarns yet he

did to Belle, and expressed much troble for your letting him proceed so far, and to break off with him at last, but the Collonell telling me he wod sure come to see mee maks me think he did that night make you some proposition to your satisfaction. I verly beleve he will doe all as he can to raise money to live in England, for when in Iorland he declared he came over to consomet his happyness in a Maryage with a lady as he has a great affection for. And marrying your daughter maks a great sound in Doblin wher he is known, and consequently cast a blor on him and maks thos as has A prejygis to him in large uppon him, and the best of men wants not enymys, so I wish sinc it has gon so farr, and my nees liked of him, that he could satisfy your demans and wish all may end to the making of my nees happy, which is my chif consarn in this affaire."

Happily, Colonel Lovett was not to be so easily dismissed, and by July he has got the relations on his side.

9 July
1702.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"... Collonell Lovett was so kind to come to Islington on Sunday and told us hee left you all well; I find hee wod be glad to A carryed the Lady with him now into Iorland, bot sayes hee must submit in waiting your time, which hee hopes you will shorten all you can. Hee spaks extreamly hansomely of all the Family, and particularly kindly of my nees. Soe doubt not bot hee will parform all thos promises hee made in adding all the happyness hee can to her, and truely hee read me a Letter from his mother on this ocation, which plesed me very much. It expressed great goodness and great ingenuity, and find by itt hee is bot 34 years of Age, which I think suitable."

13 July
1702.

Ralph Palmer to Sir J. V.

"... Coll. Lovett came to take his leave of us before he went. God send good luck in so great a work. We can add nothing but our prayers and well-wishes to you in so great a concerne, it being for life. I did inquire of one, a person of very good estate here, and Ireland alsoe, that gives him a very good character, a man in good esteem and a very good man and has a good estate also, so God bless you all. . . Your Lo. Father,

RALPH PALMER."

July
1702.

Colonel Lovett sends Sir John a full account of his financial position; amongst other items there is a mortgage on Sir Richard Bulkeley's estate of £2000, paying £200 per annum interest, to which he adds: "When it shall please Sir John Verney Bart, to

bestow on me his daughter Mrs. Mary Verney, I will receive her with all the Respect, Vallue and gratitude Imaginable."

A few days later we hear of him at Claydon, and on the best of terms with Mary and her sisters. Lady Gardiner writes:

"We gues the Collonell folows his Courtship hard now, haveing 21 July
not long to stay in England, I pray God make her hapy and all 1702.
yours."

Colonel John Lovett to Sir J. V., from Chester

7 Aug.
1702.

"Sir,—I hope & beg you will pardon me in not returning you harty thanks & owneing all the favours I had received from you; when you reflect in what a confution of mind I was in the day we parted. All I can say is that you have bestowed your favours on One that is very Sensible, and will be very gratefull, & is affixed in this resolution that nothing on his part shall be wanting in performing to a tittle what he has promised, & that the study of his Life shall be to make everything Easey & to the sattisfaction of you and yours. And the Obligations I have rec'vd. shall for ever be Owned & Acknowledged by, Sir, your obliged humbl. servt.,
JOHN LOVETT.

P.S. My nephew Tighe gives you his servise; we came to this towne this morning & intended post for Holly head tomorrow morning, when we arrive in Dublin you shall hear from yours,
J. L."

Anne Lovett, the Colonel's eldest sister, married William Tighe.

Sir J. V. to Colonel John Lovett

29 Sept.
1702.

"Sir,—I recd. yours from Chester as I was goeing to Bath, & thence it had been answered if I had known of any Gentleman goeing to Dubling; however at that place by the Prints I first heard of your safe arrivall in Ireland, which was very welcome news to me, but I must reckon myself unfortunate in not returning home ere Mrs. Smith sett out for your parts, for by her I had thought of sending you my respects & this letter. My Spouse wrote to you & you answered it to her Daughter Betty, which would have put up her Back, but that she attributes the mistake to that passion which (she hath the vanity to believe) men have for the soft sex; but to show you she is in Charity with you still, she againe wrote to you by Mrs. Smith & sends you her service by my hand. All the family are very well & much beholding to you for your favouring us with the nuespapers which are Imediately sent to Dodershall. About five Dayes since in the same cover came two of yours to the two youngest girls, who received 'em and will take

their own time to tell you soe themselves, they believing this long letter is a sufficient vexation to you for some time; however it be to you, its a greate satisfaction to me that I can talke to you this way since you are soe farr from, Sir, your obleiged servant, J. V.

Remember me to Fanny. I rest confident you'll be mindfull of t'other business as all opportunitys offer, & pray doe not starve it."

Betty and her stepmother each signed "Elizabeth Verney", which probably originated the mistake. Colonel Lovett had no luck at all in his efforts to correspond with Lady Verney; a letter elaborately composed before he left for Dublin (as appears hereafter) was put into the pocket of one of the fine flowered waistcoats of the day, and the waistcoat was left in London.

John Lovett was a young widower with two boys, Robert and Christopher, and a delicate girl. "Love and Sarvice" were sent to "Fanny" from Claydon, but she remained only a name, and when her shadowy figure altogether disappears, Aunt Adams, who had never seen her, quite gratuitously remarks, she supposes "she is no great loss". Poor Fanny!

Mary Lloyd, who was so happy as "a waiting gentlewoman" to Mrs. Tempest, writes a reassuring account of the kindly and genial society at Dublin to Mary Verney's relations, who are full of doubts and prejudices.

6 Sept.
1702.

Mary Lloyd to Lady Gardiner (sent on to Sir J. V., at Claydon)

"... Honoured Madam,—I have been with Mrs. Pearse at Collonell Lovett's, whose house is just halfway between Mr. Isher's and Dublin. . . . As far as I can judge, Sir John Verney has not only approv'd himself a wise man but a kind Father in chusing so well for his Daughter. I'me no stranger to Coll. Lovett, and do really think him a man of great Vallew, if we may depend upon anything. I can say his Principles of honesty and honour are with out exception, his temper truely good and Generous, soe that my Cousen may be very secure whenever she gives herself to him, she puts herself into the hands of a Gentln. that in all respects will certainly use her extremely well, by that I mean, with great honour, true kindness etcetera. As to his circumstances, with out all dispute tis very full and handsome, and what ever he saies of it himself may with out the least doubt be intirely depended upon, for hee is a man contrary to what is mean or unjust, and so very fair and honourable in the whole of his actions, as to scorn putting a false gloss upon anything relating to himself. I'me very particu-

larly acquainted with severall of his family . . . so that when a woman puts herself into such a family she has very little to fear . . . for Madm. you may be assured my tye in blood must make me too tenderly concerned for the young Lady to let me say more than whot is to the best of my knowledge. . . . I sincerely believe if my Cosen pleses she may be most truly happy.

I'me mightily surprised at what you all seem to apprehend as to Cosan Boat, if we may trust what is visibly seen, her condition is very well, and to appearance she has all handsome comforts, her Lodgings are good, prettily furnisht, servts. sufficient, her husband very kind—she speaks herself very happy; I do protest, I that am on the place, to have no reason to suspect the contrary, and can't but think she herself is best Judge of her own happiness. . . . To-morrow I goe back to my greatest treasure, Deare Mrs. Tempest . . . and shall be most truly pleased to return to my true Standard of happiness."

Sir J. V. to Lady Lawley

12 Oct.
1702.

"Madam,—I'me sorry twas not my happyness to see you in town, & more concern'd to hear your Ladyp. hath bin Indisposed with some fitts of an ague. . . . I was at your house where I found dear Fanny in bedd . . . there was allsoe sweet Pegg Poell, whose welfare I hope the Lord will continue. Madam, a Match for one of my daughters being proposed, & preliminaryes agreed unto, by which I must pay her portion on the day of Mariage, therefore I intreat you to clear with me the debt that remains yet unpaid, by our Lady Day next at farthest, but if you can pay it in sooner I shall gladly receive it . . . with the truest respect, dearest Madam, your Ladyps. obedient Son & very humble servant, J. V."

Colonel Lovett, in Dublin, to Sir J. V.

3 Nov.
1702.

"Honoured Sir,—I was extreamly glad to hear you was safe & well returned home from the Bath, and that I have my Lady's pardon for my mistake. The winds being Cross would not Suffer the packetts to come till we had 8 due. . . . I hope the affaire with Mrs. Gwin begins now to be right. Mr. Savage our Chancellr of the Exchequer has been ill, but is now better. The A/c of all charges on this Side I am promised as soon as the case be gott from the Severall Offices, which I hope to send you in 2 or 3 posts. . . . I am resolved in my whole course of Life shall be governed by you, let the consequence be what it will . . . the enclosed was given me when I went last from England, but by a mistake was Left in a wastcote pockett I left behind, I would have given it back to your Lady, it was only a letter of respect & wod do as well now."

23 Nov.
1702.

Sir J. V. to Colonel Lovett

"Sir,—We were three days ago at Dodershall, where I tooke the liberty to begin your health, & it being Pledged by Mrs. Piggott & the other females (all your friends) I question not but you have had the effects of their & my good wishes, a continuance of your welfare; at our return I found myself obliged to you for your kind letter of the 3rd Inst., & with it one for Molly which I delivered to her, & in yours was one from Cousn. Lloyd for which when you see her pray give her my thanks for it, & I would have returned her an Answer but my Lettr. is not worthe the Chargis. . . . Molly tells me Mr. Tighe is with you; pray give him my service, & tell him that tho' the Widdow & the Mayden are at present in teares for his absence, they will sing abundance of Te Deums when he returns to Old England. I'm sensible how much this letter hath Tortured you with its length, therefore I shall only tell you that all here in Generall are your humble servants, as is the Lady Gardiner, yet none more than, Sir, Your obliged servant,
J. V."

The Colonel's letters contained the names of many Irish Peers who seem to have been in some way concerned with his marriage settlements.

4 Dec.
1702.

Colonel Lovett to Sir J. V.

"Since the trouble I gave you in my last I have not had the honour of any from you. I hope the affair with Mr. Gwin is almost right, if there be any dependance on Courtiers; on the other side is the Account of Chargis in this Kingdom." [The charges were the fees to be paid for a Patent in Ireland for the Honour of Viscount and Baron, amounting to £320 rs.] "I am very glad to hear you have your health so well this weather & that her Ladyship & the whole family is so. I wish I might have been with them but I will wait with patience till the time comes, putting everything in that order to make everything easy & happy to those I have so great a vullue for as I have for you and yours."

26 Dec.
1702.

Sir J. V. to Colonel Lovett

"Sir,—As to the Affaire of Mr. Gwin, hearing not a sillable of it I can give you no Account on't. Its very probable that Courtiers are alike in all Reigns and promise what they never thinke of afterwards. . . . Here are severall friends of your acquaintance who are come to keep Christmass with us, as my Mother Baker and niece, Brother and Sister Luttrell with their Son etc. Your good Company woud have compleated our mirth. The Services of all here to you."

In the spring of 1703, Sir John Verney still continues to make inquiries as to Colonel Lovett's Irish estates, and receives a satisfactory account of them from "Mr. Sol.-Gen. Broderick" at Dublin:

"Kilrudderye is an estate of the family of the Earl of Meath, was his mansion house, and hath a pretty Deer Park on it . . . the Lord Meath is but tenant for Life & hath sold his Interest to Mr. Lovet. . . . I believe he lies under no incumbrance. . . . I know the Lord Orrerey sold him an estate in Copper Alley of good value, for the deeds were deposited for some time in my hands . . . he probably got a good bargain in it considering how soon after the troubles he purchased it, & from a person whose neglect of his own affaires has rendered indigent." 13 Jan.
1703.

The writer affirms that it was considered "a very nice thing" to make such inquiries, and he was not very willing to pursue them.

The delays in the correspondence are great; Colonel Lovett writes from Dublin:

"For these 14 dayes past we have had no yatch nor Packet Boates and what packets has gon from thence has been in Colliers and Wooll Shippes, which I have been mightily perswaded against but am now resolv'd to goe in the first ship Lett her be what she will, for my patience is quite worn out and I Long to be with you." 20 Feb.
1703.

After tedious waiting on the "Winds and Packett Boates", he reached Holyhead early in March, to find that his letters had not been received.

Colonel Lovett takes it ill that Sir John should persist in his questionings, to which the latter replies:

"Were you to marry Fanny Lovett you'd not take matters so in the Dark as I was ready to accept of your bare saying. Coll. its a matter of consequence I desire that what you propose may be secure to my Daur . . . & I asked nothing but what your Councell thought reasonable." 29 Mar.
1703.

John Lovett answers with spirit that if he married his daughter he must have an "Intire Opinion of the man's honour & honesty", and then he would not 1 Apr.
1703.

"trye to tye him up to such termes. . . . It's a hard matter for me to act as one in your place and as a Lover." 24 Mar.
1703.

. . . I leave my Selfe to Providence & to you, & if I must be unhappy bear it as well as I can, knowing I have acted with all the prinsables of honor, & cannot charge my Selfe with anything but what I can answer in this world and an Other."

13 Apr.
1703.

As his adviser in business he names Mr. Rudyerd, as a friend of long acquaintance.

17 Apr.
1703.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"... I wish Collonell Lovet may parform whot he promised, and whot may give satisfaction to you, sinc it has gon on so fare. I nevar saw him sinc, bot one told mee that the Collonell gave out that the stop of his proseedings was About the portion that you wod not give whot he requiard. I answered I durst sware you wod give whot you promised, and if that ware all the stop I did believe it wod goe on; soe wod say no more to what thay said. . . ."

Sir John had a vein of caution, not to say suspicion, in his character, which his business career in the East had developed, and which sometimes gives a disagreeable impression in his letters; and yet when once his sons-in-law had entered the family, he treated them with a generous confidence which they cordially returned.

While Mary Verney was patiently—and John Lovett impatiently—bearing with all the delays of their long engagement, her younger sister Margaret had a very different love-story. She was courted by Thomas Cave, eldest son of Sir Roger Cave, M.P., and second Baronet of Stanford. The two families had many mutual friends, though Sir John and Sir Roger had not actually met.

Sir Roger's mother, Penelope, daughter of Lord and Lady Wenman, who died in 1666, was nursed in her last illness by Margaret Elmes, an elder sister of Cary, Lady Gardiner, and an aunt of Sir John Verney's. Mrs. Elmes remained for some time at Stanford to help Sir Thomas Cave (the first Baronet) with his motherless children, of whom Sir Roger was one. Sir Roger married, first the daughter and heir of John Browne of Eydon, Clerk to the Parliament, and secondly, Mary, daughter of Sir William Bromley, Speaker of the House of Commons, by whom he had also a family of children. Their respective sons, Thomas Cave and Ralph Verney, were already intimate friends; so that Sir John was surprised and indignant when Sir Roger refused even to consider the alliance. He had married an heiress himself, and was resolved that his son should do the same; there was apparently a rich widow in the background. Lady Cave and his daughters seem not to have shared his views, as he included Thomas's sisters in his passionate anathemas. Every effort was made to conciliate Sir Roger, but as father and son were equally fixed in their opposite opinions, Sir John at

length sanctioned the marriage, after another appeal from his would-be son-in-law.

Thomas Cave to Sir J. V.

2 Feb.
1703.

"Sir,—My Feare affecting me more than my Hopes is the reason I desire my good friend Mr. Cherrett to make my desires known to you concerning my address to Mm. Margaret. Having seen your favourable answer, which to the Utmost of my Endeavours I earnestly covet to deserve, and must own has given me an Inexpressible Satisfaction . . . since I am convinced my greatest happiness depends upon it."

Thomas was twenty-three and Margaret not quite eighteen, when they had a quiet wedding in St. Giles' Church on Saturday, February 20, 1703. Dr. Hayley, Dean of Chichester, performed the service; but few relations were apprised of the event.

St. Giles being the Patron of travellers, his churches were built near the gates of a city. This was probably St. Giles'-in-the-Fields, a very old church, rebuilt soon after, in 1731-3, now included in W.C.2.

Sir Roger seems to have been notified of the wedding-day, and made a last effort to stop the marriage; but Lady Verney was the gayest of conspirators, and as her husband's absence relieved him of responsibility, she was determined to secure Margaret's happiness, a decision she never had reason to regret.

Lady Verney to Sir J. V., at Middle Claydon

20 Feb.
1703.

"Dearest,—I write this to let you know that I bless God Mr. Verney is come safe to town, and is very well. I like Mr. Cave every day more & more; the Letters went to Sir Roger a Thursday night, & he has sent up his parson this morning post, so he went to his lodgings but could not find Mr. Cave. Then he went to Mr. Cheret's . . . he said he must needs speak with him, for he had rid all night. Mr. Cheret said his man might know; then the parson went to Mr. Cave's lodging again; the man, as the rest did, said that he was gon to Windsor. In the meantime Mrs. Cheret came in a Coach & told me of it, we sent to the Deane, who my brother called for in a Coach & we in another, & went the back way into the Church; & they are marryed & very well pleased they are, soe I Hope it is for both their good. . . . I thought every minute an hour, till it was don this morning, for feare we should have met with a disappointment at the last. Mr. Bridegroome's man does not know where his master was, but I send for him tomorrow morning and then he may discourse

the parson, for he is the Bridegroome's friend; they both are very fine and the Bride looks very pretty. He will write to you the next post, but the Bride cant spare him now, this being the first day. My sister is very busy in providing our supper."

Sir John wrote to Thomas Cave, from Claydon, on the wedding day:

20 Feb.
1703.

"I was soe very ill by greivous pains that I kept in Chamber last week, and yet Stirr not out of the house tho' I went downe this day to drinke Mr. Bridegroom's & Mrs. Bride's healths and happiness, which I dare affirm were all heartily wisht and pray'd for. I must as well as my wife thank you for your noble present whereof I ventur'd to Eate on this your Wedding Day. . . . My service to your honest Landlord and his Lady with their little ones."

The married couple paid some family visits in London, and then went down to Claydon when Sir John returned to town.

23 Feb.
1703.

Sir J. V. to Mr. Thomas Cheret

"Sir,—Since your departure we have been very dull, without Musick or Dancing, but I hope the time will come when with you and yours we shall enjoy both again. . . . I have this day writ to Mr. Cave in return of one last night from him and wish him much happiness. Pray, Sir, give my very humble serfice to Mrs. Cheret, to the accomlisht Billie and honest Harry, and to Mrs. Diana. My two Country Girles desiar the same favour to them all."

25 Feb.
1703.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"I should not have given you this great troble now but on so good an account as the Maryage of your youngest daughter to Sir Roger Cave's Son, on which I wish you much Joy and have sent the same wishes to your daughter. I wod have waited on her ware I able . . . bot all mine has waited on your Lady and hard this great nues of her maryage on Saturday last . . . and could hardly balive it until Cary came homb, bot ware all rejoiced as much at her good fortune as if we had hard it at fust.

It being now as publick as it was privat, the privat Maryage of Mr. Cave unknoun to his Father has fild the towne with a fresh discourse, and for a time Mrs. Temple's Maryage sleeps; I wish for my Neeses Sake hee had in present whot my Cossin Brown gave wit his Daughter to Sir Roger Cave, which I think is hard he has not, bot ther is a very Considerable Estat settled and I hope his father will forgive his Son's marrying sinc Shee is his Equall in all things bot Fortun, and her beauty must Equall that. . . . Lady Knitly

died about 3 weekes sinc, bot heare she leves her woman, who you call the old King, bot £100."

Mrs. Adams wishes Sir John joy of his new son-in-law and hopes he may marry all his children as much to his satisfaction as this must needs be.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

27 Feb.
1703.

"... I should be glad to heare Sir Roger Cave's Anger was Apeas'd, sinc he had by his hard usag to his son provok'd him to transgress In not acquainting him with his intentions, which is all the ill hee has don, sinc In all other respects bot money the advantage is on his side. I am sure his maintenance was poor for a son whose mother brought £30,000, and if he storms like A mad man and says his sisters shall suffer for it, to whom he desin'd five thousand pound apiec if he had married Mrs. Cole, and that now he will give them no more than to keep them from starving. Nether will he alowe his son bot 80 pound a yeare to keep him from starving. It seems hee livs very neer my Lord Cravin in the Countrey, wher I find he thunders out his wicked Desins of pulling down the house and all his wicked portions. Bot I hope all his parswades him to be more kind and Just, and I hope Mr. Bromfield [Bromley], his Lady's brother, is so wise as to advise him to comply with you in sune reasonable manner, and pray it may end to the advantage of the Young Cupple."

Lady Verney to Sir J. V.

28 Feb.
1703.

"My Deare Soul,—I have now writt to you every post besids the Carrier, although I have had business enough upon my hands to have hindered it. Sir Roger Cave will have his letters both from Mr. Thomas Cave & Mr. Cherrett, so that he is to know I am in town with my daughter, but am to goe to Claydon next week, as the business is to be over before he can come up or send a man up to my Lady C.'s brother; Mr. C. lyes here at my brother's now, and is to continue here before the business is over and afterwards till we all come down to Claydon. My Brother likes him very well and saies he thinks him a Very Sincible Gentillman; what I told you I was to see is come home and they are very pretty ones indeed, being sett round with Diamondes." [Another letter describes "the Eareings, they are very good ones with drops".] "You must order mee how I shall have the money, for now the Jewells are bought and his Cloaths, the sooner he has it the better . . . the money is due at Mr. Hoare's. . . . Sir Roger knows to whom is the Fortune & we all hope everything will goe well; pray let me heare from you, you can't imagine how great a satisfaction it is to me. Peggy

wanted everything, and being very much out of Cloaths, money runs away; however, I will manage it as frugally as I can possibly."

Lady Gardiner admires Lady Verney's business capacity. Cary and Car. went to wait on her at ten o'clock:

"My Lady had bin out long before, which shows how early A hus-wife she is; I am glad she is so well as to rise early. . . . I am sorry for the frites you have had by fier which is dreadfull, and for the Losse the poor man had, tho' his house was saved. . . . Tis said that Tony [or Tory] Rowe won of Sir E. D. six thousand pounds before he married his daughter to him, which debt was to be part of the ten thousand pounds he gave in portion."

23 Feb.
1703.

Ralph Palmer to Sir J. V.

"Sir John, . . . I send you enclosed what nues I have, and with it in particular wish you joy in your son-in-law; we were extreemly surprised heareing nothing of it till we saw them. God in mercy bless them together & the harty wishes and prayrs of all friends here. It is a great matter, I wish ther happyness answerable to the greatness."

9 Mar.
1703.

Mr. Palmer is sure that they have had a great deal of company and much joy and mirth at Claydon, "as now attends marriage folks". The bride and bridegroom have apparently arrived at her home, having first paid their respects to old Lady Gardiner, which had given her great satisfaction. She tells them that St. Giles' Church thought the bride

9 Mar.
1703.

"a fine woman, she hoped his father will sune be kind to them. . . . Just now we had a letter from Chester, where both my neveghs Loyds now are; the Captain has bin like to dy, bot is now better, tis thought Lord Whorton cannot live; Sir R. T. has laid downe his commition. Seamourne & Finch, the great lawyers, is to be made Lords spedyly to help the Quen to more grants in Parlament. Neither Lords nor Commons were pleasd at their prorogation, and both will set out ther declarations, which as it is not come out, as I can heare of, which when it is, will be worth seeing."

The bridegroom writes the first of many letters to Sir John.

24 Feb.
1703.

"Hond. Sir,—If I have been too long without paying you my Dutifull thanks, be pleas'd to suppose my present Extasy of Joy as the sole Occation of my Neglect; and so pardon me promising to make itt chiefly my Endeavour, during my Life, to meritt the Happiness I now Enjoy, and to increas in your Favour more and

more, that I may Justly subscribe mysele now and ever Hond.
Sir, Your Dutifull Son,

THOMAS CAVE.

Sir, Pray my Love to both Sisters, and Service to all my
Friends."

Sir J. V. replies:

"I received yours of the 24th. Inst, and wish you all the Felicities 25 Feb.
1703.
of a married life. I hope my Daughter will carry herself soe well
towards your Relations, as to gett their good likeing and love, as
well as yours. I hartily pray to the Almighty for a long continuance
of both your lives in all happiness, wishing you a good Journey
hether, where you shall be very kindly welcome to Your Affectionate
Father in Law,

J. V.

P.S. My Blessing to your Wife and my Daughters love and
service to you both."

When the business in London was over, the very "young cupple"
at Claydon were uncommonly merry, and after inditing their proper
letter to Sir John, amused themselves by writing a pack of nonsense
to Lady Verney, whom they trusted to understand the jokes of her
"Deare Chums".

*Thomas Cave to Lady Verney, at The Queen's Head, in
James Street, Covent Garden*

28 Apr.
1703.

"Honoured Madam,—If over a Dish of Coffee and a powdered
Beau you'le be pleased to trouble yourself with reading this
Impertinence, for I'm afraid, with twice reading before sent to
you, You'le find half bloted out with my Teares, Innocently shedd
after your Departures.

Ha ha ha ha, poor me, as fast as I endeavour'd to write, ha, my
teares fall on itt; but hold . . . I can't but and must tell you that
one things stopt the sliding Drop on my Innocent Cheeks, for as
soon as we saw poor Duches returned we begann to Drinke our
own good healths in Sack, Sugar and Clarrett, supposing by that
time you were all, thanks be to God, gott as farr off, with your
Luggage, as Aylesbury Towns End, and I would have cry'd Just
then, bot my eyes were almost washt out, on a suddink when I
thought of Nan's baskett and that I could not gett at itt, a floud
issued from the tender springs under my Eye Lidds, wishing the
Coach could no more hold you all, than we could abstaine from
drinkeing and laughing to tickle our Fansies, to thinke how married
folks did, and how others would doe when they were married.

All the Newes here both good and Bad is the Dog Kennell pales
are most Done, and Sir John is not come home, to the great

mortification of my Gutts, for itt grows towards Supper, but Somebody knowcks at the Church Doore, and I hope tis Sir John V., if tis hay-boyes, we'le go to Supper, after you shall be infallibly troubled by your Dutfl. Son (alias Dear Chumme),

THOMAS CAVE.

P.S. Pegg gives her Duty, and bids me tell you we had no better paper. If we had we would have wiped our eyes with this."

30 Mar.
1703.

Sir J. V. to Sir Roger Cave

"Sir,—I was unwilling to interrupt you before Easter, and hope you will not be Offended at a Stranger's writing to you now, My Design being only to assure you that on all occasions I shall be very ready to serve you and any of your Family. Your Son (who by Marriage with my Daughter I'me favoured with the title of being his Father-in-Law) is at my house, and wod I were so fortunate as to se your good self with your Lady here alsoe, you might promise yourselves a harty welcome, yet I'de make it my utmost endeavours to Establish ther happyness in your and your Lady's friendship. Sir, I recommend this to be delivered into your hands by Mr. Luttrell and my Son Verney, and if they bring me word that you receive it kindly I am happy—If otherwise, I am however, Sir, your faithfull Servt.,

JOHN VERNEY.

Pray make my humble service acceptable to your Lady."

Mr. Luttrell was Lady Verney's nephew, Narcissus the younger, son of the Diarist; they carried an olive-branch from the Bride's father and a letter from Betty Verney to Betty Cave. The young men were kindly received, but the old Baronet's wrath was not to be assuaged. It is amongst the ironies of Fate that Margaret Verney, whom Sir Roger Cave was so determined to exclude if possible from his family, was destined to bring to his descendants the Barony of Braye.

17 Apr.
1703.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"... I think you did very wisely, and extream cevelly, to send to Sir R. Cave by your son and my Cosan Luttrell, and wish hee had bin so cevell to have answered your letter as well as entertaining them cevelly. He might have rit you all his resentments of his son's marrying without his consent, and am sure his Lady ought to have rit a cevell letter to my nees Cave. I am sure hee is not Just to his son if he dus not receive him into his favour and give him a handsome A Llowance, whos mother brought into his family 30,000 pound, and the Injoyments of the profit of that has built his house and added much to his Estat. So think his son may be

pardond for not bringing in another great portion; sinc his father has left him injoy so small a part of whot his mother brought. I hope my Lord Carven [Craven] may prove A good and prosperous friend to my nevegh Cave; bot wish Mr. Bromley may become a frind to him, it was great wisdom to advise the young man to aply himselfe to Mr. Bromley, who if hee bee as good as he is wise, may reconcile all; for it is in his poware to make his sister know she ought to heall up this brich; sinc it may in sume measure bee her own case and hee may bee so free to tell his sister her duty to God, and her Interest, is to medyate for her Son-in-Law, and pray God all may end to your satisfaction."

Sir John is at last preparing to leave Claydon to meet Colonel Lovett:

"I cannot certainly tell the time I shall be in London, for we are a large family & great bodys move slowly; however, my Wife beginning to settle matters here for a London journey & being we cannot all goe together, she is to be the Van and I shall bring up the Rear. As for my Son's and some of the men servants, its likely they may be light horse—so wee shall Troop up Bag and Baggage. I shall bring up . . . all things necessary for a quick dispatch of the affair which hath been soe long depending."

13 Apr.
1703.

Margaret's marriage had come about so quickly that Lady Verney had chosen her trousseau after the event, and now that the last obstacles to the Lovett marriage seemed to be removed, she spared no expense and trouble in providing Mary with a wedding outfit. A picturesque list of her clothes remains, including "damask and muslin frocks, a suit of small ribbon knots at 14s., Mechlin lace for the wedding night clothes of satanette, a gold girdle and a silver one", the undergarments being few in number though expensive in quality, "2 pair of thred stockings and 1 pair of silk" being considered sufficient. The sum of sixpence was spent in patches. The whole came to £154 10s. 2d., "besides a Wedding Cake & Sweetmeats etc."

On the 16th of June of that eventful summer, 1703, Sir John Verney was created Baron Belturbet and Viscount Fermanagh in the Peerage of Ireland; he seemed in no hurry to assume his title, but relations were beginning to use it.

The family went to London for the marriage of Mary Verney to Colonel John Lovett on the 20th July 1703, at St. Giles' Church, by Dr. Hayley, Dean of Chichester, who had lately married her sister; and at last her impatient lover was able to carry her off to his own home.

There is a long undated letter of Mary Lovett's, printed in Burke's *Extinct Baronetcies* (and in some other books of reference), which must belong to the month that she and Colonel Lovett spent at Claydon before starting for Ireland.

The Lovetts of Liscombe were one of the oldest Bucks families, tracing their descent back to the Norman Conquest. The owner of Liscombe, Sir Robert Lovett, Knight, was Sheriff of Bucks in 1608, and died in 1643. His third son, Christopher, having been in Turkey in his youth, settled in Ireland as a linen merchant, on the "Blind Key" at Dublin, where the family house still remains. He became a citizen of distinction, and was Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1678.

His second son, John, continued to live in Ireland, but kept to his interests in the old home of his family, and had served in the Bucks militia. His first wife was Susannah, daughter of Lawrence Lovett of Eythorpe.

Colonel Lovett and his wife rode over from Claydon to Liscombe. They found the owner absent, and the clergyman, Mr. Sandby, settled in the house. Mary quite failed to appreciate its interest or its beauty. It was the height of summer, but "the old Tapestry, the dark Gilt Leather furniture, and the black oak" only struck her as extremely gloomy. She was interested in some of the old letters and illuminated manuscripts, afterwards ruthlessly destroyed. Having made a complete tour of the house, including the old nurseries, Mary was glad to return to the larger windows and more cheerful furnishing of Claydon House.

26 Aug.
1703.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"... The nues of your daughter's soden goeing into Iorland surprised us who designed to A rit by Innes the Carryar to your Daughter and ther friends in Iorland; however I have maid a hard Shift to rit to my nees, whom I wish all the happyness shee can wish herself, and shall daly pray for her safe Arrivall to her nue habytation. And, as I have rit her word, I believe she gos with a husband as will add to her all the Satisfaction hee can give her; and hope you will see her next Spring againe.

I wish Sir Roger Cave had the tenth part of the good nature of Colonell Lovett and then that Cupple might sure bee very hapy. . . . I find your Quanton Races was very In Difarant; your house I know is full with your own family, bot still you have a rome for a friend, and long may you live to have your relations and friends About you."

After many delays Sir John Verney signs himself "Fermanagh", the 3rd of August 1703.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

4 Aug.
1703.

"... I am sory you met with so much wet wether in your Journey to Bath, I feared both my Nephews that was a-horseback wod bee half killed, for Mr. Moten and Mr. Sherad returned in such A wet and dismall case that thay ware not well the next day. I hope the rest of your familly that sets out to-moro will meet with beter weather, but I am suer thayel leave their frends here with wet Eys and sad harts for their absence. I shall be a daily sufferer for the wont of their good companies."

*Lady Gardiner to Lord Fermanagh, at the Widow Child's,
at the Bath*

21 Sept.
1703.

"I have with great Impatienc waited, my Lord, for a letter, hoping to have hard that you had received the good nues of your Daughter's Arrivall under her own hand. . . . Bot by the Gaset's fear her letters was Robed, but hope some other letters has come safe, sinc I had the satisfaction to find by all Inquiries I have maid, that thos as went for Iorland when the Collonell did, was safe from our common Enymy the French."

Mary Lovett has written to both her old aunts, saying how well she likes Ireland, "which mightily rejoices her cousins at Covent Garden and Islington". Mr. and Mrs. Cave seemed to have made their home chiefly at Claydon—then, in the fragmentary way that news comes out in the letters, we learn, as suddenly as Aunt Adams learnt it "at Church", that Sir Roger Cave is dead; and that the young couple are being addressed as "Sir Thomas and My Lady".

12 Oct.
1703.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

11 Oct.
1703.

"... I should not soe soon trobell you with another of my scribels, but to wish you joy of my Nees Cave's good fortune. Isterday in the Church I was told of Sir Roger Cave's death, and although it is not yousall custom to rejoys at anone's death, tho' my greatest enemy, yet I must confes I could not be soe sory for his as I ought to have bin, becos I was told whot spitfull desines he had in his head A gainst my Nephew; but I hope he dieid in a beter youmer than he lived in, which I hartily wish for his one sacke."

Aunt Adams is also glad to hear that the Lovetts have arrived at Dublin, and wishes she may have "as quick a passage back next

2 Oct.
1703.

Spring but not so sick a one. . . . Mr. Cheret's new married Daughter is gon to her new habytation; had my daughters as much money as the Town says shee has, I should not dout but thay might meet with as good a husband as she has. . . . A Fiar and cols ar vary dear & I have not cloths to keep me worm, and I have none to make my moan unto but your selfe in this world."

14 Oct.
1703.

Thomas Cheret to Lord Fermanagh

" . . . There are so many various reports concerning the Revolution at Stanforth . . . as a friend and well-wisher I would be glad of sum perticullars, there having bin one here who has given mee an account of a great deal of plate belonging to Sir Thomas Cave's Grandfather, Mr. Browne. My wife and Harry joins with me in humble service to the Ladies Fermanagh and Cave, Monsieur et Mademoiselle Verney."

26 Oct.
1703.

Sir Thomas Cave, at Stanford, to Ralph Verney, at Claydon

"Sir,—On Thursday morning my mother goes from hence toward Namptwich and soon after my Sister Cave for London, soe that I believe I shall come away, there being but little for me to doe at present. When I came here I found Mr. Wykes' Huntsman, who brought four couple of as fine Bigles as was ever seen. . . . I shall bring with me only Trueman and a Couple and a half of old March Hounds, which Mr. Wykes sent, and the Dog Ruler."

Mr. Cheret is of opinion that "Sir Roger Cave's harsh Will, if it be strictly examined, will be found more to Sir Thos.'s advantage than his enemies Immagin".

Now that Sir Thomas was in a condition to make settlements upon his wife and possible children, Lord Fermanagh was not slow in pointing out this duty to him.

17 Feb.
1704.

Lord Fermanagh to Mr. Martin

"By a letter from Sir Tho. Cave I understand he had bin to your Chambers. . . wher I hope he found you and told you his Arrant.

About a yeare since he married my Daughter when his father was living. There was then no Settlements made, but now he is willing and ready to make her a Joynture of £600 per annum out of those lands which were settled on his Mother and her Issue at his Father Sir Roger's marriage to his first wife, who was old Mr. Browne the Clerke of the Parlm't.'s Daughter. £3000 is my Daughter's Portion, more than whats above we have not yet

discussed, so when he comes to you again pray aske him what Settlmts. he'll make on his eldest son and what on younger Children and maintenance, and what if but one Daughter and no Son, and what if 2 or more Daughters and no Son. You tell him these instructions are usually given to Council for the Drawing of Settlements. If you think it's proper for me to be in towne about this business, I will come to towne on purpose."

Lord Fermanagh is still corresponding with Mr. Cheret in March 1704, about the settlements, to which Sir Thomas makes some objections. He concludes to Mr. Cheret:

"I am sorry my wife can't be so happy as to be in your house; last year it held my family, my daughter Cave's and my daur. Lovett's, but now it seems my Daur. Cave cannot spare one room to her mother, which retards her journey up." 2 Mar.
1704.

These difficulties were happily got over.

Although the two men were so much attached to each other, the money questions threatened to develop into a quarrel, but when it came to Sir Thomas writing "between Man and Man I have sett Honour for my Marke", and his Lordship's reply, "I hope nobody can say that I have failed or forefeited Honour in any particular," 29 Feb.
1704. it was time for Mr. Cheret to intervene, and to assure Lord Fermanagh that Sir Thomas's "Chiefest End and desire is to shoe Himselfe noe less kind than generous", if taken in his own way; and to give equal assurances to Sir Thomas, who was at that time his guest.

Lady Fermanagh, in London, to Lord F., at Claydon

"My Deare,— . . . I am in dayly expectation of you, and hartily wish you a good Journey. . . . Here is a great many fine things bought, and more to Come home, and some packt up for Stanford. Here is great alterations in towne a mounge the Great Fokes. Lord Nottingham has laid downe and Lord Kent has a great place; my Lord Keeper is to be put out, but I don't heare who is to be in his room. Pray tell Mrs. Verney I will manage her present to Mrs. Lovett as well as I can, and so I will for Mr. Verney, but shall Lay out nothing till you come to towne." 25 Apr.
1704.

Lord F., in London, to Lady Cave, at Claydon

". . . Pray give my blessing to Sir Thomas and your brother and sister. . . For news, Matches are proposed for 3 of the Maids of Honour, but to whom and other Court news, I'll refer you to Mr." 23 May
1704.

Oughton, who frequently is in the Drawing-Room on Court nights. I thank you for your hopes of seeing us at Stanford, but I doubt your house will be pretty full with your husband's Sisters, if not the Dowager Lady Cave; and I think it is not proper for us to come when they be there, considering how dearly they love us, and what discourse and nicknames some of 'Em give us. So God bless you and send us a happy meeting at one time or other.—I am your affectionate father, FERNANAGH."

5 July
1704.

In July, Lady Cave acknowledges a visit of one night from her mother, "But a taste of that happiness I have so long wished for, tho' I fear this has bin nothing but a fatiguing journey for her". She presses her father to pay them a visit and congratulates him on his "New Bargain at Steeple Claydon, which I hear you have bought".

Lord Fermanagh has written to congratulate his sister-in-law, Cornelia Palmer, on an intended marriage. She replies:

11 Sept.
1704.

"I must confess my Inclinations are not at present towards Matrimony, notwithstanding the great slaughter A mong the men, but you know, women sildom hold long in one mind, soe I can't answer for the feuter."

Lord Fermanagh writes to Lady Cave a month later:

28 Oct.
1704.

"Your Aunt Cornelia is not yet married, but fine diamond Earrings, with a new Charrott and Equipage, wait for her word of Command."

6 Jan.
1705.

Mistress Cornelia's reluctance was at length overcome, and the wedding bells rang once again, January 1705, when old Mr. Palmer, in one of his usual curt communications, announced that there was no news, but that "My daughter was married yesterday". His son was more communicative.

8 Jan.
1705.

Ralph Palmer, junr., to Lord Fermanagh

"This comes to bring your Lordsp. the good news of my sister's wedding, which was performed at the Temple Chappel, with a great deal of Resolution, from whence we returned to dinner at Chelsea."

Lord Fermanagh writes to the bride:

"I am very glad to hear that you are married, and not only so but with the Addition of very well and happily. . . . Pray give my humble Service to your Husband, to whom I wish a Long and Lasting Joy and the comfort of many Children by his Deare

Cornelia. I must be short, else I shall detain you from your visitors. Therefore farewell, and may the Great King above all Bless you."

Sir Thomas Cave writes two days after the birth of his boy Verney in Leicester Fields, his wife's troubles being "bravely over", that Mrs. Palmer had called upon them from Chelsea, "and that Mrs. Cornelia was married, as this Day, to Content, as tis hop't".

7 Jan.
1705.

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

9 Jan.
1705.

"I have sent you in the Box the Poem of Mr. Addison on the late Campaign, with another New Book, supposed to be writt by the Lord Haversham; to Employ some of your vacant Minutes in, if such Source of news will Divert you I'll send 'em, as often as I meet with any.

I was this afternoon with my Sister Verney at Chelsey, to see the Bride and Bridegroom; the first seems mightily pleas'd, and looks very well, and the Latter looks Jolly and Lusty; so I hope she will be fully Satisfied for He is a very neat-Good-Look'd man; and it's a Comfort to see how all of 'Em seem to be pleased. After this be pleas'd to let my Lady know that I am sorry for our disappointment; tho' the house is small, We shou'd have bin glad to have bin Streightened upon her Acct., whose Company would make amends for all other trouble."

Mrs. Cornelia Dunk appeared shortly after as a matron at the family christenings.

Narcissus Luttrell mentions Thomas Dunk, in the course of his Diary for 1709: "On 29th September Sir Richard Hoare and Mr. Dunk were sworn Sheriffs of this City." Cornelia Dunk's husband was apparently knighted, after serving as Sheriff, as Lord Fermanagh thus addresses him in the next year.

Lord Fermanagh to Sir Thomas Dunk

7 Dec.
1710.

"I am infinitely obliged to you for your letter of the 4th, that my other four Tickets were yet in the Barrill. . . . Tho' fortune hath yet sprinkled but 2 of her favours on me, yet I really hope that some of her largest ones will fall to your Lotts. My wife returns you thanks, hath a 20 shilling prize and 2 blanks out of 5 Ticketts, so that she hath two still undrawn. But I heare not of anyone else of my acquaintance that hath got any prize. Sir, I pray you continue your kindness in acquainting mee whether my remaining Ticketts come up blanks or prize, otherwise I shall live in ignorance as I did untill you were pleased to inform me of the

Tickets 49 and 373. Pray give mine, my Wife's, and Daur. Lovett's humble service to your good Lady, and to my sister Eliza. Palmer.
—Your Lov. Bror. & humble servant, FERMANAGH."

In Lord Fermanagh's pocket-book there is a happy sequel to the wedding bells:

"On July 15, 1704, at Dublin, Mary Lovett was delivered of a girl, christened Elizabeth. Gossips were (the Baby's two Grandmothers and her Great Grandfather) Lady Fermanagh, Mrs. Lovett, and Ralph Palmer, senr., for whom stood Colonel Lovett."

"On Sunday, December 2, 1705, at Middle Claydon, Daughter Lovett was delivered of a Boy, which on Saturday 8th December was christened Verney. Gossips: the Godfathers were Edward Brabazon, Earl of Meath (for whom stood Ralph V.), John Verney, Lord Viscount Fermanagh, and Mrs. Lettice Piggott the God-mother."

"On January 4, 1705, Margaret, Lady Cave, was delivered of a boy in Leicester Fields, which was baptized by Mr. Bond, Jan. 18, named Verney. Gossips: Basil, Earl of Denbigh; John, Ld. Viscount Fermanagh, and Mrs. Alice Palmer, for whom stood (her daur.) Mrs. Cornelia Dunk, and for Ld. F. stood Ralph Palmer, junr."

"On December 1, 1706, in Park place, St. Jamsis Street, she was delivered of a girl, christened by Mr. Wm. Vickers—Elizabeth. Gossips: Lady Vics. Fermanagh, for whom stood Cornelia Dunk, Lady Dowager Cave, for whom stood Pen Cave, and the Lord Craven."

Other children followed in both families.

In all the family weddings, Cornelia Dunk was the only dissatisfied bride. She had argued the case with old Sir Ralph, who was warmly in favour of marriages, which provided the lady with a fine new coach and the latest mode in diamond rings. Cornelia finally consented to be married, but justified all her own gloomy predictions. Her brother and his wife looked after her affectionately and when, nine years later, her health failed, saw that she had the necessary medical attendance. Ralph Palmer sends more details to Lord Fermanagh:

16 May
1717.

"... This is to let you know that my Sister Dunk died this morning at next door, Sir Thomas being in Kent, to whom I dispatched a man on horse this morning by three o'clock. We did not perceive much alteration and that was in her speech, but she is perfectly worn out for want of aliment, having taken nothing in a manner but physick.

She had no desire of seeing Sir Thomas nor was willing I should

send to him, but I thought it proper so to do. We have not been deficient, neither my wife nor I, in what we could do to serve her, and she took it very kindly, but she was a miserable spectacle, and has concerned us much.

We are all your and your family's true Lovers, and none more than, Dear Sir, your affectionate Uncle and Servant,

RA. PALMER."

CHAPTER IX
THE GREAT STORM

TOWARDS the end of November 1703, what was long known as the Great Storm broke over London, causing great loss of life and still greater destruction of property.

The daughters who were nursing Lady Gardiner at Islington scarcely knew whether to attempt to move her out of her bed. Cary Stewkley writes next morning to Lord Fermanagh:

27 Nov.
1703.

"There has been so Tempestious A night that we ware all afraide that the house wod have bin blon down apon us. Severall topts of oure Chimlys blon downe, and great part of the topts of the house, that is tiles & the bricks. We have bin all up most part of this night, and in such a frit whot to do with my mother, who hopes that you have not this great winds with you; all our Gardin wall is blon downe to the ground and severall housis about us rept up, and A vast deall of mischift done."

The storm was still more violent in Covent Garden, and old Mrs. Adams, who was scarcely fitter to move than her sister, fled from her house with her daughter, to the sound of crashing roofs and chimneys, and took refuge in the Church porch. In an old print of the Square of Covent Garden, the ample porch of St. Paul's Church stands out conspicuously.

30 Nov.
1703.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

"Till I recd. your Lordship's leter I was in great feares for you and all my friends at Claydon, for hear and all other plasis that I have yet hard from not only lossis of housis and trees but many peoapells livs, of which number my Lady Pen Nicholas was one, and Sir John had a naro escap; but he is lickley to live, being but A litell brused, but she was killed in a moment; and ther hous so misrabbill brock down that they had scars A rome to lye in, and ther hous at Spring Gardin is misrabbell shattred too. My Cosan Nickolas is still

at Albins, my Lady sent up her keeper isterday to see us after our great frit, and he tells mee she has escaped beter than many of her neibors, but her hous is untiled and most of her Park pales down, which is but A small los to whot her neibors' is, for onne of them, whos name I know not, has lost to the vallew of A thousand pounds. I bles God wee have Escapd with our lives, but our hous is much damiedged, part of the chimnes was downe and sum of our neibors' chimnes fell on our hous and brock our roofe, and we look every moment when the hous wod ly flat; and we got out into the Church porch and stood ther for som hours, expecting every moment to see the hous fall. But God was mor mercyfull to us and did preserve it, tho it is very much shatred. Pegg cannot ly at hom, but I doe, My Frit has bin so great I know not when I shall recover it. I heare the Bishop of Bath and Wells [Dr. Kidder, who had succeeded Bishop Ken] and his Lady is killed bot am not serting of the truth of this; ther is one Simson, a Scrivener in the City, that is killed and severall mor too many for me to name. It is said that wind has dun mor harm than the fier of London. I am greved for the Los of your firr trees etcetera, but when I think your lives are safe it maks up all with mee. . . . Amonxt all my dismall stories I have one piece of good nues, that is, my sister Gardiner is lickly to live out this bit of sickness and I hope when the Spring cums on she'll mend a pas. When you write to my nees Lovett, be so kind as to put my service and good wisheis in one corner of your letter."

Dr. Denton Nicholas, who also spent the night of the storm in Covent Garden, writes to inquire after his Cousins at Claydon, and gives his account of the tragic death of his aunt, Lady Penelope Nicholas, confirming Mrs. Adams' story.

Dr. Denton Nicholas to Lord Fermanagh

30 Nov.
1703.

" . . . I hope in God you have suffered very little by the terrible storm on Friday night. This town is most dismaly shattered, scarce a house in it but has been damaged. Our Square looks as if it had been bombarded. Our hous was in good repair, so we have suffered as little as any hous in London; £20 will not repair any of our 5 or 6 next neighbours, 30 or 20 tiles will set us to right. Mrs. Sherrard's hous is escaped very well. My Cos Adams' hous is terribly mauled but thay are both well. I heard from Albynes yesterday, they are all very well, and have not lost one chimney but tiles and park pales innumerable, and a few trees."

I last night heard from Horsley the most melancholy account that can be imagined. £100 will not repair the damages the hous has suffered, and without doors the Seat is almost spoiled, 10 or 12 intire rows of trees are blown down which were set for the Ornament

of the seat, of which half were in their full prime, being Walnuts, Elms and Abeels of about 80 years; but this losses are trifles, A Chimny and part of the hous fell upon my Lady Penelope and Sir John in their bed, and buried them in the rubbish. My Lady died immediately, Sir John was taken out alive and is now, as the Surgeon sais who went down to him, out of danger.

I give your Lordp. thanks for your obliging invitation of me to Claydon, and am very sorry that my profession, which requires a continual residence here, hinders me from waiting on you.

Pray give my humble service to your Lady, and my Lady Cave and Sir Thomas, my Cos Eliz. and your Son, and believe me to be your most obliged and humble servt.,

DENTON NICHOLAS.

P.S. The bill agt. occasional Conformity was read a 2d time this afternoon, and the hous divided whether it should be committed or no: Yeas 210, Noes 130. Admirall Beamong is supposed to be lost on the Goodwins."

Lady Penelope Nicholas, whose death is mentioned in every contemporary account of the Great Storm, was the daughter of Spencer Compton, second Earl of Northampton, one of the most heroic of the Cavaliers, who was killed in the battle of Hopton Heath while she was a child. Her brother, Henry Compton, was still Bishop of London at an advanced age. She married Sir John Nicholas, son of another ardent Cavalier and elder brother of George, the husband of Nancy Nicholas, and identified herself with all the joys and sorrows of her husband's family. Lady Penelope is often referred to in the Letters, and at the time of Nancy Nicholas's funeral, which Sir John Nicholas attended, she is mentioned as keeping the widower company at home in his great trouble.

Her husband did not long survive the shock: his own death is mentioned in a letter of January 1705.

Old Mr. Palmer adds his account of the storm from Little Chelsea:

30 Nov.
1703.

"I bless God we are all pretty well and safe in my house, not a tile missing, but part of my wall next the street downe. This Miserable towne makes a dismall sight, abundanc of people killed."

The storm had wrecked Bristol as much as London; both cities looked as if they had suffered from a bombardment. Richard Leys writes from Cowbridge in Glamorganshire:

"I hope your Lordship has received but little Damage from the late dreadfull Tempest. I thank God we here of no life lost on shore in this country, but Tiling, Thatch, and Windows have



Eighteenth Century London. By Scott.

suffer'd much, and almost all our Elms, and great part of our Orchards, are down."

Thomas Cheret to Lord Fermanagh

30 Nov.
1703.

"My Lord,—I am heartily concerned your Lordp. has had so great a share in the last dredfull Storme; however you have great reason to be satisfied it has not bin so fatall as to many; Especially to poor Sir Thos. Cave's brother, whos shipp, I heare, is cast away on the Sussex Shore, and but 14 saved. I send this enclosed to your Lordp. for him, that you may prepare him for itt, knoweing your kindness for him."

Lord Fermanagh to Thomas Cheret

8 Dec.
1703.

"I received yours of the 30th., which was sad in respect to Mr. Charles Cave; of a person that I never saw, I know not of anyone that I soe much esteem as I doe that gentleman. God forgive them that were the cause of sending him out for a Sacrifice. But if it be the Divine Will that Mr Cave be among those that are saved, I would have Sir Tho. keep an Anniversary of thanksgiving on that day as long as he lives, and I'le Joyn with fervency. Honest Sir Tho. will deliver this to you, I'me sure he can't be better than at your house, wher he is sure of your friendship. In the late tempestuous night my Damage is more than £500 at this place, what it is in Berkshire I have not yet heard."

Aunt Adams writes:

"... I am sorry to hear Sir Thomas Cave's brother is lost, but ther is dailey fresh reports of the loss of ships, which sum peopell is in hops that thay are not lost, and I hope his ship may be one of them." 17 Dec.
1703.

The news is confirmed, and Sir Thomas writes to Ralph Verney at Claydon:

"I have recd. Information that my Dear Brother is lost, so that there is none left now but your Afft. Brother and Humble Servt." 16 Dec.
1703.

The most serious blow to the nation was the loss of a great part of the Navy. The Queen ordered a day of public fast and prayer in all the churches.

We have a graphic account of it from Defoe, in his "Essay" in Rhyme, "The Storm"; Defoe was in Newgate at the time:

Let me be where I will, I heard the storm;
From every Blast it echo'd thus—Reform.
I felt the mighty Shock and saw the night . . .

And every time the raging Element
Shook London's lofty towers, at every Rent
The falling Timbers gave, they cried—Repent.

The Queen, an emblem of the still small voice,
Had told the Nation how to make their Choice—
Told them the only way to Happiness
Was by the Blessed Door of Peace.

So soon the black'ning Clouds drew near
And fill'd with loudest Storms the trembling Air;
I thought I felt the World's Foundation shake,
And look'd when all the wondr'ous Frame would break.
I trembled as the Winds grew high,
And so did many a braver Man than I . . .

He describes the wreck of the Navy, and the wreckers, more cruel than the "barbarous shores", attacking, instead of helping, the distressed sailors. Luttrell gives an account of the damage done by the great wind, but does not mention at first any individual deaths except those already given in Mrs. Adams' letters. He estimates the loss of our seamen at "some thousands". The ship commanded by Sir Thomas Cave's brother was probably the *Newcastle*, marked on an old list, of "280 men and 54 guns". The House of Commons addressed the Queen that she "would be pleased to make provision for the families of those seamen who were lost, and that the House will make good that expense and the building of such ships to replace those lost in the late Storm".

Luttrell reports that the Severn banks "were washt down by the overflowing of the sea, some thousands of acres layd under water, and a great number of cattle drowned. The Admiralty received a letter from Sir Cloudesley Shovell, who brought about half his fleet out of the Downs." The Admiral only escaped then to perish miserably in 1707, in another storm, though less severe than the tempest of 1703.

Defoe's moral was unfortunately soon out of date, as Marlborough's great victories made the war most popular both with the Queen and her subjects, and Defoe led the way with elaborate but well deserved compliments to the great soldier.

The storm was answerable for another tragedy, the news of which does not seem to have reached London immediately. Winstanley's famous lighthouse on the Eddystone Rock had only been finished in 1700. The designer had gone to the lighthouse to superintend some repairs and alterations, when the storm carried away

the whole building, Winstanley himself and the men in charge perishing in the waves. Addison, in his poem of "The Campaign", dedicated to the Duke of Marlborough, to celebrate the victory of Blenheim, in paying the most extravagant compliments to the General and to Great "ANNA", borrows his finest simile from the storm which had devastated the country a few months before:

So when an Angel by Divine Command
With rising Tempest shakes a guilty land,
Such as of late o'er pale Britannia past,
Calm and Serene he drives the furious blast;
And, pleas'd th' Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.

A frail reminder of Winstanley's lighthouse has just turned up (Aug. 1929) in a Manchester curiosity shop, in the shape of an elaborate picture of the lighthouse with all its quips and cranks, lamps and flags, embroidered in gay wools upon a girl's sampler. It is difficult to imagine any structure less likely to withstand the storms of the Channel.

Another famous name in literature is associated with the Great Storm; a friend of Pope's, Mrs. Tempest (a suggestive name which he idealized as Daphne), died during that terrible night, and his Fourth Pastoral is dedicated to her memory. Compared to the energetic lines of Defoe and of Addison, the imagery of the poem, which is supposed to allude to it, suggests that Pope has never heard anything more alarming than the breezes that ruffle the silver Thames. This is his reference to the Storm:

'Tis done, and Nature's various charms decay;
See gloomy clouds obscure the cheerful day,
Now hung with pearls the dripping trees appear,
Their faded honours scattered on her bier. . . .
Ah, what avail the beauties Nature wore?
Fair Daphne's dead, and beauty is no more!

It is like the caprice of Fortune, which preserves the names of one or two human actors while those of equally brave men are left to perish—that one storm, out of the many that have vexed our shores, should be singled out for remembrance, and that not only by contemporaries. In conducting his hero through the wars of Queen Anne's reign, Thackeray bids us rejoice that Esmond, by not asking for leave of absence from the army in Flanders, escaped the fate of friends and comrades who perished in the Great Storm of November 1703.

CHAPTER X

ELECTION INS AND OUTS

THE family politics are difficult to follow in the early eighteenth century. In the testing days of the Long Parliament, Sir Ralph Verney had boldly thrown in his fate with Eliot and Hampden, to the great displeasure of his Royalist relations. Then his loyalty to the Church of England made him refuse to sign the Covenant, and his hatred of military rule made him rejoice in the Restoration and accept a baronetcy from Charles II. on the ground of his father's services. But when James II. broke all his pledges, the Liberal spirit of the old Parliament man revived. He supported William III. and the Protestant Succession in the Convention Parliament.

Sir John Verney, with his many years in the East, was not so well versed in home politics; his disapproval of Lord Wharton, the Whig leader in Bucks, and the way in which his talents and his money had alienated Sir John's Hillesdon cousins and other friends, prejudiced him against the party. It was a time of political confusion; each man seemed to call his neighbour "a trimmer". The politician was the butt of satirists and preachers: in Tillotson's sermons he is "The designing Man who hath been laying Trains to blow up his Rivals, and waiting opportunities all his days to worm others out and to skrew himself in"—and the "designing Man" was styled a "Fanatick" or a "Jacobite", according to the predilections of the writer.

When Sir Ralph Verney died, the Borough of Buckingham was represented by his cousins Sir Richard Temple and Alexander Denton, and the County by Hon. Tom Wharton and William Cheyne, Esq.

Sir John Verney was asked to stand for the County soon after his father's death, probably at the bye-election caused by Tom

Wharton becoming a Peer, and again at the General Election of 1698, and was twice defeated, to his infinite disgust.

During this Parliament (August 1698–December 1700) Alexander Denton died, but no place was found for a Verney, and Edmund Denton, soon after made a Baronet, succeeded his father. The Dentons of Hillesdon were completely under the influence of Lord Wharton, whose brother, Goodwin Wharton, succeeded to his seat in the County when he became a Peer.

Sir Edmund Denton is often mentioned in the Letters; he was a rich man, a kinsman and a near neighbour, but the cordiality of an older day no longer existed between Claydon and Hillesdon; Sir Edmund continued to be elected till his death in 1714, when the baronetcy became extinct. Tom Wharton became Viscount Winchendon and Earl Wharton in 1706, and had much patronage to bestow. When he was Lord-Deputy of Ireland, he made Joseph Addison Secretary of State, Alexander Denton, Sir Edmund's brother, his private secretary, and Dr. Lambert his chaplain.¹ The two former were much together, and Alexander Denton must surely have been influenced for good by Addison's companionship; while his legal training may have added weight to the Chief Secretary's gentle and not very business-like character.

They accompanied the Earl of Wharton to Winchendon in April 1709, and thence to Dublin; and in July 1710 Luttrell records that Alexander Denton "arrived in London with several bills from the Parliament of Ireland for her Majesty's approbation, & in a few days will take them back again".

To return to the Bucks elections: the usual miserable topics of consolation were offered to the beaten candidate, and the suggestions that the election had been unfairly conducted—more often true than not, in those times.

Nancy Nicholas to Sir John Verney

2 Jan.
1697.

"Tho I cannot congratulate dear Sir John of suckses this time, yet I beleve by the making yourself known it will be a very good step maid for your standing again at the next opportunity, then I shall hope you will not faill of it.

I hartily wish you would narrowly looke into the Pole, for tis a great a front put upon the Cuntry to be so imposed on by a company of Knaves & Dessenters."

¹ Luttrell, Dec. 23, 1708.

5 Jan.
1697.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

"I was in great hops my Cuntry men would have made themselves hapy . . . in their choys of you, but I see men as well as wimen often chuses to the worst, & so has my felow bumcins dun now."

Mrs. Adams was evidently very pleased with her joke of "my felow bumcins", as she repeated it as often as they failed to elect Sir John—and alas ! she had many such opportunities.

9 Jan.
1697.

Sir J. V., at Hatton Gardens, to Sir Roger Hill of Denham

"It is the opinion of many in the Vale [of Aylesbury], as well of the Freeholders in the Chiltern, that the late Election was managed with more then answerable cunning, but its hard to find out the faults soe as to prove 'Em positively. It being done by Legerdmain and Ordinary people are cautious if not fearefull of disoblighing men in power."

26 May
1697.

Sir J. V., in London, to Coleman

" . . . As to Buckm, I am a meer Strainger to the Bayliffe and all the Burgesses & never haveing done the towne any kindnesse I can't expect the favour of being chose by them, & therefore I don't give them any trouble. I have been baulked once lately & am unwilling to receive a second disappointment."

17 May
1698.

He was unable to adhere to this resolution.

The next year he writes again to Coleman:

"There is now no remedy. . . . Capt. Piggot did not use me well, but kissing goes by Favour. Mr. Cheney ordered a Barrill of Beer at each Inn for the Freeholders, but they being angry with him, went away most of 'Em, and would not drinke it. So Soldiers that quartered thereabouts were his Guests & the hired Old Militia Men that have no voices. This between us . . . Col. Goodwin Wharton continues ill still & its much questioned whether he will ever recover; he was prayed for last Sunday in Covent Garden Church."

Goodwin Wharton did again represent the County of Bucks in three subsequent Parliaments.

13 July
1698.

Sir Roger Hill to Sir J. V.

"Sir—Upon my comeing to towne, I found your letter, the kind expressions in which as to my selfe, I doe owne my selfe to be very much oblided to you for; but am heartily sorry it did not bring

the account which I hoped for, as to that which I desired of you. Since I had the happyness of discoursing, I have met with further encouragement to believe you could not fayle of success. . . . I think our County Court will be Wednesday the 27th instant, and then the choice must be if the writ be delivered to the Sheryf six days before their time: I hope you & your honest neighbours will not fayle to be there, if it be only to secure my Ld. Ch. [Cheyne], a certain Ld. whom you ghesse hath by the assistance and importunity of a very great Ld. prevayled upon Sir John G. [Garrett] (against his inclinations as he himself says and against his declaration) . . . but this I desire you would keep to yourselfe. I pray Sir be pleased to present my thanks to your Lady for her seconding my request to you, I hope your next will bring an account of your compliances with her and my desires, every honest man ought to oppose the tricks some use."

Sir J. V. replies:

17 July
1698.

"Sir,—This is by the very next post after I receav'd yours of the 13th, & truly my wife having been Indisposed since her Journey hath kept me from seeing my Neighbours or Inquiring after their Intentions as to their Choice for our County, & the next being a Harvest Parliamt. many of my friends live very remote from Aylesbury, soe that tho' I may have their good wishes, yet I doubt I shan't have their Persons their at this busy season of the yeare, for which reasons I Continue still of the same mind as I was, and shall redily contribute my Interest with that other Gentln. and Freeholders when I knowe their minds, & hope they will pitch on your good selfe, for tho' you are Prety sure to Carry it at Am. [Amersham] yet I think the County cant be better served then by Sir R. H. both for Estate, Parts and Integrity; I am but a Stranger in the Land, and knowe the Chiltern can cutt the Vale out five to one as to number of Electors, yet I have heard, the Vale doe at all times think it hard if One of their Knts. be not of their part of the Country. This I think the freedome to hint, fearing it may prejudice yourselfe or Ld. Che., by which means two that live not in the Country may get to be Chosen. I observe that you say of Sir J. Garrett, & my opinion is that if he be soe Tongue tyed by a party while he is still out of the House, that he will too readily dance after their copious Consciences while he is in it."

Sir J. V. to Dr. Woodhouse of Berkhamptstead

25 July
1698.

[He begins by saying that when Dr. W. had promised his support, he, Sir John, had declined to stand.] ". . . But on Thursday last being at Aylesbury with my Lords Carnarvon, Abingdon, & many Gentlemen and Freeholders . . . they declar'd they would not stirr

unless I did, which made my Lord Abingdon and the rest of the Company engage me to be in the field, where I promis'd I wd. be, to serve my Lord Cheyne my kindsman and friend, then 'twas agreed they wd. set me up with him.

I am very sensible its too late now as to myself, however to serve his Lordship I am content to be once more bawket [bawled]. . . . I now intreat your Vote & Interest."

This forecast proved true as far as Sir John was concerned; but his interest helped Lord Cheyne to get in again.

A picturesque Election placard, which is preserved among the letters, figured in this contest in 1698—

NO COURTIER.
NO PENSIONER.
NO JUDAS.

One Election is no sooner over than they are preparing for the next.

5 Sept.
1699.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"I heare what great company had bin at my Lord Wharton's, & was to goe downe with him to the Rase, & that my Lord had bestoed £4000 in furniture for Winchindon, & a bundance of this Sir John Arundale told Cary; she met with company as talkt of the Interest of men made to be Parliment men, & a munxt others hard that you did for Sartain stand for Kt. of the Sher [shire], & that my Lord Wharton's Interest Incrist insted of decresing, bot you may gess thay ware shy in spaking ther thouts of this afare before her. . . . I fancy Mr. Price's feasting will be to no porpos, for Sir R. & Sir E. D. will hold together a gainst all others; & thay have as good pursis as Mr. Price, & can spare mony beter than a man of many Children. . . . Sence soe many buchars & other tradsmen is found robars, & not one soulgyar a mongst them, I find the sword men has gained much honnor."

Roger Price was elected for Buckingham in 1702, but only served in one Parliament.

21 Sept.
1699.

Thomas Livings, from Denham, to Sir J. V.

"Right Worshipful Sir,—Upon notice of your Worship's design to stand for the County next Choice: I think I cannot honour myself more then by promoting your interest as much as lyes in my power."

He sends a list of gentlemen friendly to Sir John, including the Dean of Windsor; Sir Henry Seymour; and several Clergymen in the south of the County. Sir John replies that he doubts whether there will be an Election that year, but he begs Mr. Livings to assure his well-wishers that "I purpose to stand for the County if I'm alive."

15 Oct.
1699.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

27 Sept.
1699.

"Sir,—I must first give you Joy at your being well after your being at Buckingham, wher I declare I should A bin against your drinking with men as has cost you neer your life, & many a miserable month of misery, & thank God you aire come homb well, & I pray God keep you from suffering from any hands.

I was to see Lady Russell on Thursday bot she was in the Coach, & the Doches of Devonsher & Lady Darby with her, both going to dine with Mrs. Howland out of towne; bot shee came out of the Coach to tell mee of her Ingagement with sume kind expressions of consarn for leaving of mee so I could have noe discours with her of publick consarns, soe from her I went to Cos Nicholas & shee had that day invited my Sister Adams to dine with her at A peace of boyled befe, & I took [the opportunity] to name Elections & how shamfull a thing it was to think whot breches it maid in famyls, bot shee waned it all she could & cared not to answer to what I said. . . . I hear the Doctor has much more practis then he had which I am glad of, & think him a good Doctor." [Denton Nicholas, Nancy's son.]

". . . Sume wishes a new parlament, becos thay say that this did not oblig the King in any one thing; nor did not make good the fonds, as they promised to due, and by necklecting that dishonors the parlaments of England; bot thinks the King will let them sit out their time, and try if they will regain ther Credit when they meet. I hope you will Incres your Interist A gainst A new Election, and that you will get the Earl of Bridgwatters' party to your Side, and that Lord Cheney will be firm to you. I have hard my Lord Bridgwatter has a great respect for Mrs. Egerton, and women dus often prevayle in thos Afares; and I am sure Sir Thomas Tirrell can Ingage her to be A great Advocate for you. So tis but trying if you Aprove it; & Sir John Busbee may cast in his request too, tho' I think the Lady's the best, if she has those parts as I have heard she has. You nevar hard anyone more spok of then the Lady W. [Wharton] for Sir R. T. which is said makes them so great."

17 Oct.
1699.

Lady Gardiner was the keenest politician in the family, and was ready to petition every Duke in the Peerage to make "Interest" for her beloved nephew. It is remarkable that, old and poor as she

was, she seemed to have means of approach to most of them, in the small circle of persons of quality in which she had so many good friends. "Dukes counted for much in those days", as Lord Rosebery reminds us.

The Peers were such large landowners, in the Counties, that they practically controlled the elections to the other House.

24 Oct.
1699.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"... I am glad the Minister of Stewkley is your friend, being a substantial man. . . . Cary has seen him twice & I'm glad A good Church Man. . . . I hope I shall heare the men of Stewkley as was to dine with you has assured you of the freeholders of that towne; I feare the Anabaptists & Presbyteryans will bee not for you, except they have a peck A gainst the Lord & Mr. Neall. I wonder at no thing as Mr. Parkhurst dus. . . . His chief tenant will bee for you which may be a leading case to the rest. As to that Lord your frend, I doubt not bot hee will make you sherif if hee can, & his power is great; you may be sure I will not speke A word of such A thing to anyone, nor nevor speke of any thing you rit of this nature, bot whot may bee cryed at the Cross, bot now my consarn is how to prevent this mischef, for hee will due it so secretly as to have it past getting off, before it shall be known. I have cast in my thouts many wayes, & if one has timely notis of it, I wod git my Lady Rossell to try if the Duke of Bedford wod doe mee the favour to get you off; for I can speke to him, and I wod git my Lady Rossell to try the Duck of Devonsher; as for his Douches, she I think cannot get it dun so well as Lady Rossell who hee may sunest oblig; bot ther is no depending on him. Methinks the Duck of Leeds might stand your frend if you think my Lady Lawley wod be faithfull to you, I know my Lord Shresbury is a favourit, & Sir Charls Shugboro is great, bot I likewis hard my son Stewkley say Lord W. & Those meet often, so cannot trost Sir C. S. My Lord Sunderland is my Lady Rossell's Cossin German, if he has an Interest at Court now, or if we could get the Duck of Somersit, I am sure hee is in great favour and a sober man. I wod get Lady Rossill to send me to him who maryed Lady Northumberland's daughter, for Lady Rossill maks no visits ther; bot the Dutches visits her. I think of all the waies I can & wod have you to consider all I rit, that if I could due good wod Ly in towne a weeck, & be as harty A solisiter for you as I could for my Life, for all thes parsons I could aply my selfe to, and by the Dutches of Devonshir try whot the Duck of Ormond wod due for me. So pray cast in your thouts & let me know whot way you think best. I know the fals promisis great men wil make, soe due depend on none. Beside

Lord W. is Aquanted with all great men, bot I wod spar no paines to sarve you."

"... I shall be glad to know ... that my Lord Bridgwater could be mov'd for you, who I heare is the most considerablest of all. For Mr. Harfard you may be sure of him in oposition to Lord W. who I find dus feast the freeholders & so must you & all as hops to make them ther friends."

31 Oct.
1699.

Lord Cheyne, at Lisle St., to Sir J. V.

5 Nov.
1700.

"Sir,—It was unfortunate that the only meeting I had with you this summer was at the funerall of Mr. Baker, where I could not have the opurtunity to congratulate your recovery & discours the County affairs wherein we are both concerned in freindship and be assured I will perform according to my last letter. The reports all this summer of a new Parliament has made me look about. Since coming to Town I find the best Judges are at a Loss nor is it yett resolved whether the old or a new Parliament shall sitt. However I think my self obleged to acquaint you whot Mr. Robert Dormer told me the other day, that he designed to stand for the County, and not to joyne with anybody either with Mr. Wharton nor my selfe. I mention'd you as a Candidate, he said he thought your health would not permitt, in which I hope he will be mistaken. I beg the confirmation of your former resolution & your opinion whence this sudden notion of his can arise. I cannot beleeve his own perticular interest can give him any hopes of success, but it must come from another Corner, a freind-ship contracted in the last Sessions, contrary to whot brought him thither. With conveniency I beg an answer to, Sir, Your faithful Servt.
W. CHEYNE."

Sir J. V. replies from Claydon:

"My Lord Cheyne,—I recd. the favour of your letter under the 5th Instant, which informs me Coz. Robert Dormer designes to stand for this County, & it is not unlikely for he is of a Soaring temper, tho' he hath the Management of a Good Estate in Buckinghamshire by his nephew Sir Wm's Lunacy, yet I thinke he is no freeholder in this County, this he told me himself, but he hath thoughts of buying Dorton House & 2 or 300 Acres that might be sold with it. When I was at Bath I had notice that Ld. W. with his Lady & the Duke of Shrewsbury dined one day at Lee with Mr. Dormer, & possibly the business was then concerted. I cannot beleeve he was to carry it by his own Intrest, but to joyn with the Colonell, which is onely a trick of somebodyes to divide our Intrests, by which meanes the Coll. may carry it for the County, & Sir T. Lee get in at Aylesbury. I thanke God I am finely well, much better then I have been at any time these two yeares, & I

10 Nov.
1700.

hope I shall so continue. I heare Sir John Chester, Mr. Towers [?] & Mr. Weedon are those presented for a Sheriff of the Shire, I wish I have not a back friend that watches to get them off & me on."

A back-friend is a Shakespearian term of reproach:

One whose hard heart is button'd up with steel . . .
A wolf, nay, worse, a fellow all in buff,
A back-friend.

(*Comedy of Errors*, Act IV., Sc. 2.)

23 Nov.
1700.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

"Sir,—Senc I rit to you heare has bin a young Devine with mee, one Mr. Little John, who now soplys the place of our Lectuerer who is gon to his father in the country . . . & this Mr. Little John I find is a very active man and is much at my Lord Carr's [Carmarthen's], & tells mee how zealos my Lord's Steward is for my Lord Cheany, and you, & is very often at my Lord Cheny's and assurs mee my Lord Cheeny's Intrest is to his knowledge Increst sinc the last election 150, in thos partes which is all A bout Alesbury & Tring and Lyscombe wher Mr. Lovett lived, & he convarses with many about your partes & sayes he hops your Intrest is Increst about Buckingham, notwithstanding Sir Richd. & Sir E. D. which being soe much for my Lord Whorton maks them dispised by the Church party, he hops you will stand. I told him I knew not your mind for it, but did beleeve you wod had desiard him to proseed in his gaining voyces. He is a well bred men & has a parsonage of 140 a yeare in revartion after his own father which Sir Winson Charnock gives him and under good circomstances besids, so as he can have more intrest than many of his cowl. I wish if you stand you may have it, I gess you heare that Sir E. D. & Sir Thomas Smith is A greed to reckon to my knowing made up that businesse, whot summe is payd is not named, but tis said that Tory Kna. [Knaves] gits money bi it, the truth of it I know not, but he is very unfortunate to bee thought to make all advantages of Sir E. D. tho' he marryed his daughter. Till Mr. Pryare returns from the ffrench King nothing will be said how fare wee shall ingage in that afare.

I hartyly wish the arch Byshop [Tenison] wod prosecute Sir R. Temple for that inhuman action, but I doubt it much, finding fue men as is rich receiving punishment of that nature, tho' God often sends them afflictns. to make them sencsible of his displeasure. I have hard Sir E. D. nevar loved the Cuntry divartions but feare he will be undon by his father. I heare he will take care of Jack Denton & I am sure Jack Nicholas has a very good father

so ther is no feare of his doing well, but find by many hee is not a man thought capable of great things. . . .”

She wishes he would come up to London before Christmas, he must be a few days at Aylesbury for the election, but wishes he may do what is best for his interest.

Sir J. V., at Claydon, to the Right Honourable Montague, Earl of Abingdon.

3 Dec.
1700.

“My Lord,—Its my misfortune that I am unknown to your Lordshipp, and your Extraordinary good-ness to have me in your thoughts, for which I want nothing but an opportunity to serve you with Joy and Integrity. Here hath been some suggestions as if this Parliament shou’d be dissolved & it can set but one Sessions more. Therefore whichever happens I purpose to stand for this County, and hope your honour will befreind me with your Interest. I am by that party that opposeth me, threatened to be made Sheriff. But that little shift shall not fright me from the honest principles of serving my Country to the best of my understanding and if I am incapacitated by that slightfull means of standing, I shall endeavour to have those chosen in whose judgments I may trust my small fortune. My Lord most Criminals plead ther first fault in Barr of Condemnation, & this of troubling you being mine I hope your clemency will forgive it, and permit me to be your Lordship’s very humble & faithfull servant, JOHN VERNEY.”

Lord Abingdon had been a great friend of Sir John’s father, and his first wife, Eleanor Lee [whose portrait is at Claydon], was Sir Ralph’s ward. But John’s long sojourn in the East had made him a stranger to many of the family friends.

Sir J. V., at Claydon, to the Honble. Henry Bertie

2 Dec.
1700.

“Sir,—I find you continue your obleigeings to me, for which I am very thankfull, & wish you’d command me any service that I might in some measure aquitt myselfe and shew you how ready I am to be gratefull. I understand my Lord Abingdon is in Berkshire, & tho’ I am a stranger to him yet tomorrow by Post I’ll kiss his hands with a letter to acquaint him that upon the next Vacancy of Knts. for our Shire, whether by a Dissolution or other final setting of this present Parliament, I’ll stand for the County and hope both he and you will assist me with your advice as your good selfe and the noble Peer your Brother did at the last election, for which Beleive me, I am your very obliged humble Servant,

J. V.”

11 Nov.
1700.

Charles Greenwood to Sir J. V.

"... I have only one piece of Ill News to add, which is the Parliamt. is dissolved this day, and Writts are Issueing out with all Speed for a New one. May the Country have deserved so well of you as for itt's good to prevaile on You, att this critical juncture to stand. If so, Successe therein, and all your desires is most hartily wisht you by, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

CHARLES GREENWOOD."

5 Dec.
1700.

Robert Dormer, at Lincoln's Inn, to Sir J. V.

"Sir,—If you have no inclinations to serve your selfe in the next Parliament of which I have had no notice, But been Informed of the contrary by some of your Neighbours, I shall be highly engaged to you for your Vote and Interest in my behalfe, who offer my Selfe as Knight for the County of Bucks. I stand independent without joining any person whatsoever. If you think me deserving of that Honour and I succeed, I shall endeavour to meritt that Character & to act as becomes, Sir, Your faithfull humble servant and Kinsman."

This polite letter, adorned with many flourishes, was very unwelcome to the recipient, who had been discussing "Cousin Dormer's soaring temper" with Lord Cheyne. He replies with some annoyance.

7 Dec.
1700.

"Sir,—I received your Letter of the 5th and should be glad to have heard who those neighbours are that told you I'd not stand for the County at next election of Knts. for this Shire, for whenever that discourse was started I allwayes declar'd I would be a Candidate, but untill there be a Probability of a new Parliament I did not think fit to trouble the Gentry and freeholders with messages—but stand I will—and if I loose it, it will please me if Gentlemen of more worth be chosen then, Sir, your humble servt. and Kinsman,
J. V."

12 Dec.
1700.

Sir J. V. to the Earl of Lichfield

"My Lord—I recd. your Honrs. letter of the 9th full of friendly expressions for which I am very thankfull & wait for an opportunity to express my gratitude for the so many favours shewed me. I was at Bath, & have found much benefit by it, & I thank God for I am now very well in health and strength. If there be a dissolution or other determination of this Parlt., I designe to stand for this County, and hope my Lord Cheyne and myselfe will carry it, tho' my Coz. Robert Dormer who stands, & is now of Wharton's Interest, pushed hard for it, by sending their messengers about &

report I will not stand, which is Egregiously false as themselves know, so I have sent & do continue to, 2 or 3 servants about the Vale, & already next weeke I design to send one into the Chilterns, where I have let some friends know of my standing & desired them to spread it about. Dormer's people gives out the dissenters are for me, when an Anabaptist preacher rid about to the same freeholders that were not so for him, but I doubt I have been tedious . . . so with all respect my Lord. Yours etc. J. V."

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

14 Jan.
1701.

" . . . I have nevar bin without vexsation sinc I hard Mr. D. stood, foreseeing whot wod follow, bot am glad he is put by at both plasis, sure hee rose up as an Aperytyon to take off your voyces, hateing such actions as I hate the Divell, & may all such meet with no better socksis then hee has had, tho' it has cost you much troble & much money. You have the advantage to know who is real, & who is fals to you, for you may say tis not an open Enymy, bot private ones as has don you mischef. And from such Good Lord delivar you & mee & all my frinds. I find you have feasted all sorts of people & am glad you have done so, that you may prove them Lyars as said you had not the hart to due it, bot now must give themselves the lye. . . . As to your going to Buckingham, I heare you are condemned for it, bot I tell them after Sir E. D. declaring no frindship for you, it set you at Liberty to apear for thos as was your frinds; besids you ware to meet many freeholders ther, I am sorry that things has not gone to my mind, bot thang God you are Above all these Inconsiderable things. I pray take care of your owne health which I chiefly mind. . . . Ther was nevar greatare striveing for Westminster then in this Election. Colt & Sir Sam, & Cross, & Vernon, & Sir Thomas Clarges; the Bishshop is for the latter I heare, thay Poll perpetually, and one day one carys, and another day another, thay say it will hold this fortnight. Sir Charls Duncom is for sartain chos for Ipswich in Suffolk, bot will stand for London & for the County of Middlesex."

The New Parliament met in February 1701, and only sat a few months. The next, which met in December, was dissolved after King William's death; another met in July 1702, and again in 1705; in none of which did Sir John find a seat.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

16 Aug.
1701.

" . . . I thought better things of Mr. Bates, as for Mr. Churchill he brought that opinion into the world with him. His father was a violent man that day, bot men of his rank I due not so much wonder

at, as all the rest. I find Sir Thomas Tirrell had no more favour than you have, I am glad hee dus not hard with all that crue as Mr. Main dus, I am told Winchester has don as Buckingham has don, so I think the Nation is mad. Tis thought if this Parlt. was desolved most of them wod bee chosen againe. How rediculous dus Sir T. make himselfe in being led by Hill and Main. Mrs. Dormer needs come with an excuse in her mouth for delaying her visit; I know that famly and the Busbys prety well, so think them best to join together, I wish ther was more true frindship a monxt neighbours, but I think a real love and frindship is near lost as monxt neighbours. I have no nues to send you but what I gess you know, that the Earl of Rochester goes next week for Iorland to be Debuty ther. Hee is wise, and I think will be true. . . . My Cossin Boat. . . . I sopes shee is not highly maryed bot hop tis not so ill as sume maks it."

This lady was a sister of Sir Edmund Denton's, and in the event of the failure of male heirs was likely to inherit a fortune.

11 Nov.
1701.

Robert Dormer to Sir J. V.

"Hond. Sir,—A Proclamation is ordered, which will be published this night or tomorrow morning, for the Dissolution of this present Parliamt., and for the calling of another to meet on the 30th. of December next.

My intentions are to offer my service for Knight of the County of Bucks, where, if you should not entertain thoughts of the same nature, I should highly Vallue to myselfe upon your vote and interest, the which favour I will study to deserve. . . . The Lord Godolphin hath surrendered his Character of ffirst Lord of the Treasurey."

27 Nov.
1701.

Lady Gardiner to Sir J. V.

" . . . I am glad that you will not Consarn yourselfe nor Care who was Chos wher it not for the good of the Church & King, & Kingdom . . . tis beleved most of the old members will be chos again as was not for the Cort party. We hear Jack Bow is chosen a gaine, Westminster is a polling but as A Colt is like to carry it by the mob, bot your Cosin G. has all the substantiall men. Sir Charls Duncome stands for the Citty. Wensday next is the Election for Middlesex. I did think how Buckingham wod goe & am sorry Mr. Price wod stand a gaine, I am glad Sir Ed. has dined with you & that Company, wishing kindness between your two famylies. . . . I wish Mr. Butterfield may have good boardars of the three young ladys who I knowe not, bot am sorry ther mother has cast herselfe away, and soe predygisid her children, I wish the singing master may not get

one of my Lady Busby's daughters, which you know is a commonly don, & thay are young & prety, & tho' ther fortunes is not great, yet with ther buty might match well, except the ill Carracter ther brother Parson has, dus not hinder them. . . . I begin to take Linseed Oyl which Mr. St. Amand prescribed me in my last illnes. . . . My nevegh Verney Loyd was to see us last week & desiars his sarvice might be sent to you. . . . I heare Sir John Coffin is like to be chos at Cambarige, & that Sir John Cotton contends with the Duck of Bedford to be recordar of Cambarieg, which is a place of honner bot noe profit which sum of his relations is sorry for, for it Cims [seems] none bot noble men uses to have, bot I have bin told Sir Thomas Mapls who was but a borrownet had it, who was father to my husband's first wife."

Thomas, Lord Wharton, to Sir J. V.

22 Nov.
1701.

"Sir,—Having taken the Liberty to trouble you with a message before, & understanding by your answere, that my Brother's standing for this County was not disagreeable to you, I give you this forther trouble to desire that you would direct the same to bee made knowne to your Neighbours that you wod favour him with your Countenance & Interest. I am, Sir, Your very humble Servt.
WHARTON." (From Winchendon.)

Sir J. V. to Lord Wharton

25 Nov.
1701.

"My Lord,—I receav'd the Great favour of a letter from you whereby I'me obleiged to give your Lordp thanks beseeching you to Excuse this troublesome way of doeing it, & to rest assured that your worthy Brother's standing for this County to be of the next parliament is no way disagreeable to me, soe I shall let my Neighbors know as oportunity of discourse offers, & I further assure you that directly or indirectly I have not made one Voice against him, for truly I meddle not any wayes about this Election. I crave leave to subscribe my Lord, Your Lordps most humble and very obedient servant,
JOHN VERNEY."

As soon as King William had died, and months before the Election was due, Sir John (who had declined to stand himself) was being canvassed for his "Interest" in the new House of Commons.

The irrepressible Robert Dormer again applies to Sir J. V.

"Hond. Sir,—The present Parliament determining after six months from the death of the late King, my Intentions are to offerr myselfe as Knight of the County of Bucks in the ensuing Parliament. If you think I have deserved that Honble. Character;
19 Mar.
1702.

I have acted with fidelity to my Country, whose service I have and shall always endeavour to the utmost of my power. I beg the continuance of your freindship, of which I have had experience, and for which I returne my humble acknowledgments, who am, Sir, your Kinsman & most humble Servt."

19 Mar.
1702.

The Hon. Goodwin Wharton to Sir J. V.

"Mr. Dormer and myself having had the honour to represent your County in Parliamt. and having flattered ourselves with the favour of your Countenance for the same (with my humble thanks to you), I doe now begg the continuance of your favours to us, and I am sure in all respects I shall be proude of serving you and own myselfe your most obedient and most humble servant,

G. WHARTON."

2 Apr.
1702.

Viscount Cheyne to Sir J. V.

". . . I have inclosed the Queen's speech which is full of affection not only in words to the ease of the subjects in point of money, the £100,000 to defray the publick charge when given (for) her own use is earnest of her future good government, I doe not doubt but it will be continued to us during our heavy taxes, we shall have I hope an honest administration."

Sir J. V. replies:

7 Apr.
1702.

"My Lord,—I'me thankfull for your letter . . . and your thought of offering yourselfe for our County for the next Election wherein I wish you may succeed, but my influence can contribute but little towards it, Not that I have Ingaged myself anywayes as yet, but fortune hath placed mee in an abode that is much surrounded with Anti-Churchmen and such as violently oppose Lord Ch. In a fortnight's time I hope to be at London, when I'll wait upon your Lordship and discourse it more amply."

5 July
1702.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir J. V.

". . . We have had so much nois with the Poling for Parliament men in this Church Portch, that the noys is scars out of my ears still, but now the Elections is almost over hereabouts, and I hear littell talkt of but of the Ladies goinge to the Bath . . . I have not hard who is chosin for Essex yet, bot my good wishis is that all honest men may be chos everywher concludes this from your most affectnt. Aunt & humbl. servt.,

E. ADAMS."

Lady Gardiner congratulates Sir John on the victory of the candidates he was supporting, Lord Cheyne for the County, and Roger Price for Buckingham:

"... I obhor Mr. Mason for brecking his word with you bot I was told you said his Bills ware deare, soe tis ten to one bot that mad him falc to you. I find these Corporations is torned about with the wind, which maid old Noll Cromwell bee for more Knights and fewer Burgesys, and hee was a wise man tho' an ill one. I hope the next oportunyty of some vacant Election you may have fairer play than you have had and torn the Enymy out. I think Mr. Dormer can bare an Afront as ill as any man. By Hee being A counted a high man, bot his genarous umoures has maid him many frends; bot being of the party as is goeing downe at present has bin A great means of losing it. [Robert Dormer had represented the County in December 1701, lost his seat the next year, and regained it in the Parliament of June 1705]. Tis said Lord Jams Cavendish chalinged Mr. Cross which is looked on as an act very rash, but his youth excusis him. I cannot imagine why Sir E. Denton should be Angry with you, when you did not as much as Apear at the Election. I wish you had bin in his stead sinc he is angry without A cause."

30 July
1702.

"... I cannot but tell you of whot A Devine told a friend of mine, hee being at your Election at Alsbury . . . that Mr. Dormer seeing one hee knew going to be set down In the number of voyces as was A gainst him, called out and told them, that man had no voyce, which the man hearing, said to Mr. Dormer, if I have no voyce why did you send mee ten shillings to give my voyce to you? This caused much sport to Mr. D's enymys and made him chang his countenance. This coms from a man of credit and is talked of publicly."

8 Aug.
1702.

[Sir Henry] Colt sued Sir Thomas Clargis for some misdomenyar bot Clargis has cast Colt; bot ther is like to bee much trouble about Sir Francis Childs Election, and two of the Collonells in the Citty sayeing thay have put downe nams for thos as had bin dead Above 20 yeares; so it will be brought in Parliament."

On March 2, 1703, Luttrell records that "the Honble. Goodwin Wharton has quitted his command as Lieut.-Col. in Lord Windsor's regiment by reason of his indisposition." He died in 1704, in the course of this Parliament, and his death caused a bye-election for the County, referred to in the following letter; all meetings being complicated by a virulent outbreak of smallpox at Aylesbury.

*Fra. Duncombe to the Rt. Honble. the Lord Fermanagh, at
Claydon, Bucks. Humbly this*

6 Nov.
1704.

"My Lord,—May it please your Lordsp., On Wensday next will be the Election; I have caused a Booth to be built near half a mile

from the Town, in the fields, where all those that are afraid to goe into Aylesbury because of the small Pox may conveniently Poll. I desire that your Lordsp. will engage your Lordsp. Neighbours & good friends to come early that morning, for Perhaps a good Show may prevent a Poll which will be an ease to the Countie, of all which I thought meet to acquaint your Lordsp. I return your Lordsp. most humble thanks for all favours which shall always be acknowledged by, My Lord, Yo. Lordsp. Most obliged, most humble, & most obedt. servant,
FR. DUNCOMBE."

6 Dec.
1704.

Lord F. to Col. Lovett

"... I suppose you have heard that in Col. Wharton's room Sir Richd. Temple was chosen Kt. of our Shire by a Majority of 231 Voices more than Mr. F. Duncomb, the other candidate, & that Mr. Ja. Herbert being dead, in his vacancy for Aylesbury Sir Hen. Parker carried it by 3 voices against Simon Maine."

The famous case of *Ashby v. White* must have interested the Verneys, because the man, who claimed to have been deprived of his vote, was an hostler in one of the old Aylesbury Inns and had the honour of setting the two Houses by the ears, and the Queen, unable to reconcile them, put an end to it by proroguing the Session.¹

Sir Godfrey Kneller lived for twenty-one years in the Piazza, Covent Garden, where Betty Adams and her Mother were in 1703. He painted the Archduke Charles, titular King of Spain, afterwards Emperor Charles VI. He emerged early from his lodgings, and it was one of the invalid's pleasures to watch him start and see him pass.

5 Nov.
1705.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

"... The towne fills very fast, but littell nues cums to my chimney corner. The Whiggs is mitley pleased, so thinking the day is ther owne, and that they shall quite run downe the poore Church of England but I hope theyl nevar Accomplish that wicked desine, I dout not but God will defend his Church, tho' he suffars itt to be punisht for A Time."

8 Dec.
1705.

Lord Fermanagh to Lady Cave

"... Mr. Browne Willis was chosen at Buckingham in Sir Richard Temple's room, to the Great Mortification of the Whigg Party there. My House at present is indeed very full with my own family

¹ Fully described in Turberville's *House of Lords in the Eighteenth Century*.

and strangers, and I guess you have a budgetfull of letters from some or other of Em."

The family had just been increased by the birth of Mary Lovett's little boy.

Lady Cave replies:

"I'm glad Mr. Willis succeeded at Buckingham, and I think the other Party may very well bear that mortification, Since all things run soe currantly on their side as they doe at present." 11 Dec. 1705.

Lord Bridgewater to Lord Fermanagh

14 Feb. 1706.

"My Lord,—Mr. Dormer being made a Judge, gives me an Opportunity of Settling up my Brother Col. Egerton for the next Election, and for ought I can know as yet there will be no Opposition, I shd. be wanting to his interest if I omitted intreating your L'dship's favour which I'm sure and sensible wd. not a little contribute to his success."

Lord Fermanagh to Lord Bridgewater

17 Feb. 1706.

"My Lord,—I'm glad your Lordshipp setts up Colonell Egerton to be our Knt. of the Shire in Parliament, and believe there will not be any Opposition. But if at the Election any person should presume to struggle for it, I'll reddily appeare with what Interest I can make to serve the Collonell or any other friend of your Lordship's, being wholly, my Lord, Your Lordsp's. most Obliged humble servant."

"... Since my Lord you have three Candidates for the County, I must suppose Col. Egerton to be of the Church Side, if so I wish him Good Luck to be one of the Elected. For what place will Sir Richard Temple stand, or will Mr. Denton and Sir Rd. oppose Mr. Williss. I find that they have severally begun to make Interest in Bucks. Wee hear nothing as yet of Opponents in Northamp-tonsh. or of the certain Innovation in Leicestersh." 22 Dec. 1707.

Richard Hampden, at Hampden, to Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon 23 Dec. 1707.

"Sir,—The time of Election of Knights for the County of Bucks drawing near, I am desirous to offer my service to my Country and hope you will favour me with your Vote and Interest, which will be a particular Obligation to, Sir, Your very humble servt.,

R. HAMPDEN."

In the next Election of 1708, Richard Hampden sat for the County with Sir Edmund Denton. Lord Fermanagh devoted him-

self to family and county affairs, and left politics alone, as far as his personal ambitions were concerned, after many disappointments. His age and his constant ill-health seemed to justify his retirement, but this was not to be the end.

During all the years that Lord Fermanagh was disappointed in his attempts to enter the English House of Commons, it seems curious that he should never have exercised his privilege of sitting in the Irish House of Lords.

As he grew more infirm, his daughter's experience of the long and stormy passages to Ireland may well have discouraged him.

There is a summons in May 1709 from the "Lord Chancellor from Dublin in Ireland", "that those Lords who are absent do immediately attend Service at this House".

Lord Fermanagh replies, hoping to be excused, as:

"... Besides being 70 years of Age I am afflicted with a Multitude of Ailments, as Stone, Gout and Cholick, that I am never a week free from some of them, and am in no fit state to undergo any travelling. All which reasons besides my not having any Employment etc. in Ireland, will I hope be a sufficient excuse for my not being in that Kingdome. But wherever I go I shall always be, My Lord, your Lordps. Obleiged and very Humble Servt.,
FERMANAGH."

(Docketed as "The Lords' Order about absent Peers.")

In contrast with the election contests of the present day, it is striking how little the candidate was then expected to express his own opinions, or to pledge himself in support of the questions to be brought before Parliament. He seems to hold no public meetings, nor even to publish any detailed address. He attended some farmers' ordinaries on market days, when political toasts were noisily drunk and immense quantities of ale were consumed. He also met his brother magistrates after the Assizes and Quarter Sessions, and received promises of support, but there was a great deal of private intrigue, and the candidate's "back-friends" were very busy. He himself sent round his servants to inform the freeholders of the district that he meant to solicit their votes, under such and such a party's flag. In the case of a county election, the candidate had agents acting for him in the principal centres, who sometimes mildly suggested that the voters would like to have an opportunity of seeing him, if this were not asking too much.

But if his brain and his voice were spared the exertions of perpetual speeches and visits, his purse was very heavily called upon.

Great feasting and drinking began long before the actual election, and though the House of Commons made efforts to control bribery a vote was considered by public opinion as a piece of personal property, to be sold to the highest bidder.

When this vast expenditure did not secure the seat, or landed the member at once into the fresh expense of an Election Petition, when the life of each Parliament lasted so short a time, and the vicissitudes of parties were so violent—it was not surprising that a defeated candidate became discouraged, and announced, as Sir John did, in this last election of King William's reign: "I stirr not for any body. I intermeddle with them no more."

MEMBERS FOR BUCKS COUNTY

1698 to 1700. Lord Cheyne and Goodwin Wharton.

1702 to 1705. Goodwin Wharton, *d.* 1704.

Sir Richard Temple.

Lord Cheyne.

MEMBERS FOR BUCKINGHAM BOROUGH

1698 to 1700. Sir Richard Temple.

Alexander Denton, died during the Session—
succeeded by Edmund Denton.

1702 to 1705. Sir E. Denton.

Roger Price.

CHAPTER XI

RALPH AND CATHERINE

13 Oct.
1703.

FRIENDS are bestirring themselves about a marriage for Ralph the heir, and Mr. Cheret writes in strict confidence about Lord Hatton's daughter, "Whose eldest sister married my Lord Nottingham, so that there is no want of Birth nor Intrest". Lord Fermanagh replies that he thinks the fortune insufficient:

16 Oct.
1703.

"You see the cheapness of the Sex . . . my son is very young, and I hope may deserve more if he carry himself discreetly. Had I a dependency at or from the Court, to marry to a family that hath a good Interest there might be beneficial, and as I am I value it as a hapyness, or feather, which one may live without."

29 Nov.
1705.

In November 1705, Mrs. Anna Tregea is busy about it; she writes to Lady Fermanagh of a girl "that is very hansom and extreamly well bred, notwithstanding she is of great gentility, she is bred to all afares concerning a house; and afares of good Housewifery."

6 Jan.
1706.

Lady Fermanagh replies after an interval about the "Not impossible She":

"We have all the highest respect Imaginable for both the Ladyes tho' unknowne. I can assure you that att Bath a Cittizen propos'd (to my husband) a young Woman for Mr. Verney with £7,000 downe, & £8,000 more at her Father's Death, who I think hath noe other Child. But Mr. Verney being Indisposed & at Bath for his health, My Lord did not thinke it seasonable to treat at that time."

12 Feb.
1707.

Aunt Adams had never ceased to wish that the charming Catherine Paschall of Baddow Hall should be her great-nephew's bride. She announces that the Paschall family are coming to London:

". . . My Cousin Kitty will be the day she marries worth 8,000 pound, besids her share in my Lady Appilton's Jinter when that

falls, And a beter youmered or discreter Woman cannot come in to A family. I hope you'll not think whot I rite is out of aney self ends for I protest I have non but my sincere love of you and them."

Catherine Paschall's mother seems to have died while her girls were young; the Lady Appleton mentioned was Catherine's grandmother, widow of Sir Henry Appleton, Bart., of a Norfolk family.

"Lady Draper is this day gon out of town, now the Court high days are past, but before she went shee had A dancing bout at her hous, and sat up herselfe at it, till 4 A clok in the morning, & wod have sat longer had the Companey stayed." 12 Feb.
1707.

The ladies in town are anxious about Ralph's garments, and are executing his commissions.

Lady Fermanagh to Ralph Verney, at Claydon

3 Mar.
1704.

"Deare Mr. Verney,—I have spoke to Mr. Bedford and he tells me that nobody has such a thing as Silk Buttons to a Silk wascoat, and that if you have it done with Silver it will be very handsome, and my Lord thinks so too. You have sent up one half of your briches and I must have the other half of them sent up, for the briches is too long and we want that which is too much for the briches to make the wascoate compleat, and can't doe without it, so pray don't fail to send it up by John Innes the Carryer next week. Mr. Bedford says he will pass his word they shall fitt you and it will come to ten shillings more than Silk Buttons, and your father bids me wright you word that Silk will look very ugly. I will take care to doe everything for the best when I know your mind. . . . Sir Ed. Denton has very rich Leverys a makeing at your tailors' next to Lord Conoways, a white cloth a laced with Crimson Yellow and Gold, the breath of your hand, and made full Laced like the Queen's. The Prince has the Gout and the Doctors think it will be the better for him as to his other distempers, he is at Kensington. Everybody is in mourning at Corte, it being Lent most other people are so too. Pray remember me to Mrs. Verney, and I wish you both in town every day and that all health and Happinness may atend you is the prayers of your loving and affectionate mother,

E. FERMANAGH.

My service to the Butterfields and Mrs. Abell."

Ralph's eldest sister, Betty, has written for Mr. Bedford's bill:

"We wish for you here every day, believing it not to be contrary to your Inclinations, I am sure tould be very much to the joy and satisfaction of Your Affect. Sister,

E. VERNEY."

16 Feb.
1707.

Lord Fermanagh to Elizabeth Adams

"I recd. yours of the 12th., and am glad you are well, God continue you soe. I suppose the Good Companie of the Baddow Hall Ladies contributes much to your health, for certainly there is no remedy for the Vapours like pleasing Society. You know I have ever had a great veneration for those pretty creatures whose Father is expected in town, and I doubt not but many considerable matches have been and will again be proposed to him for them. . . . As to my son if she does not dislike him I shall be very ready to wait on their Father in London, tho' Journeys are troublesome to one of my yeares and Infirmities. But on the good opinion I have of his integrity and desire to see his Daughters well disposed of, I will attend him on your summons when you have discoursed him and his daughter on that subject. I have never mentioned her to my Son in that way, nor do I think it proper to doe it until I see whether its like to come to anything."

This resolution was not kept. On the same day Lord Fermanagh repeats to his son what he has written to Aunt Adams :

16 Feb.
1707.

" . . . I confess the Character I have heard of Mr. Pascall will make me very wairy how I deal with him, but I hope what I heard at Bath and also at London was spoken more out of malice then anything Elce. God grant us his blessing in this important affair, and that it may prove to your future happiness is my earnest desire and hearty Prayer. . . . Let me know anything elce that you can fish out of Aunt Adams of that Affaire, tho' it be not to be depended upon, for she is extreemly in their Interest."

Aunt Adams is able to send a favourable answer from Cousin Paschall, and begs Lord Fermanagh to come up to town as soon as possible:

20 Feb.
1707.

" . . . I am a-going to pay my last respects to my Cosan Nicklas who is this night to be buried in this Church by his wife. I hear his plas in the Custom Hous is in danger to be lost . . . what grief this may caus I know not, but Lady Abdy a side, I think there is not many that is lik to dy with sorow for him."

23 Feb.
1707.

Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon, to Ralph Verney

" . . . I have a letter from Aunt Adams that Mr. Pascoll is in towne, so I write to her that I will be with him this week, but I would not have you speak of it to any other family. . . . Your mother would also have you buy a hatt for little Lovett of the same bigness of as is Master Cave's, or a little less. [It was a

compliment to Ralph, though not yet a family man, that the ladies thought him capable of choosing proper head-gear for the babies.] Cousin Lloyd desires you at the same time to send downe her Snuff, soe buy it in a readiness. Send youer man to my Soape boyler, his name is Marriott and Lucas, living in Holbourn almost over against Sothampton Street, and bidd him get me ready one at least (but maybe I shall send for two), firkinges of Soape such as he uses to sell me. They must be redy next Thursday to be sent in at a minute's notice because they are to come in the Coach, let it be of the best Crowne Soap. Tis said Sir John Witterong is made a Col. and that four new Regiments are to be raised. If men are as scarce in other Countries as they be in this, the Officers will find it very difficult to get their Number of Men. I had a letter from Mary when all our friends were well at Dublin. Your Mother and Cousin remember 'em to you, she'l send your Shirt. Tis Church-time, soe God Bless you."

"Deare Ralph,—I got on Tewesday night home, tho' hindered some time by the fall of my Trunck from behind. J. Scott and Perry alighting to help him, let his horse goe, soe that we were an hour in the darke in North Marston field before we could goe on, and then Scott was forst to carry the Trunck before him, which made us goe very softly to prevent other accidents. Since my return I have been very ill . . . the Caves were here when I came but went away the next morning to dinner at Lady Cave's and so home to Stanford. Sir Tho. rec'd a letter that his gardener coming over the Bridge fell into the River and was Drown'd, being in Drinke, and that two of his horses have had chances. I think one of 'Em was a Colt for the Coach, the other a Mare, I did bidd him fifteen pounds for his horse, he stood for sixteen, I told him no more would I give soe he said he would send him. He was in the coach with the Children when I bade him the money so that I did but just see the horse under the Postilion. My service to the young Lady and her sister . . . which is all I call at present to mind, more then that I wish you prosperity in all your undertakings."

20 Mar.
1707.

Sir Thos. Cave, from Stanford, to Lord F. at Mrs. Borrodale's, The Blue Boar, in Bow Street, Covent Garden.

22 Dec.
1707.

"My Lord,—We rejoyce to hear that all are well in Bow-street, and that your Lordship and Mr. Pascall have adjusted all things, but I wish that the Young Couple will not have reason to censure the Tedious Lawyeres. It is well the Town Air proves so fruitfull, the same cannot be said of these parts. . . .

I have a week agon sent the Duke of Montague ten brace of Deer, of which two brace were coloured, and I rec'd by his car-

riages that fetch't the deer eighteen doz. large bottles of very good red wine, and also by a letter the other Day he told me he intended me some White wine, as soon as the Weather was favourable. Of which we earnestly hope that in the Spring your Lordship and my Lady with our Claydon friends will do us the favour to come and taste. By my Dear's from Lady Fermanagh, we perceive that your Lordship has bin so Kind as to sett for your Picture, to which favour many thanks are Due, and we humbly Desire that we may have my Lady Fermanagh's since Time with Opportunity now Interceeds for us, it is hoped this Petition may be granted—my Wife and the two Pretty Young Ones still continue well."

Mr. Palmer has been on a visit to Baddow, where Ralph is courting Mistress Catherine, and he feels that he can never thank the good family enough for their hospitality to him. He would like to discharge some of his obligations "either by piping, fiddling, or worse singing, or by any other method that is acceptable". Ralph contributes to the family music with his lute.

Lord Fermanagh has requested his brother-in-law to give him an account of the house of Baddow where it is proposed that Ralph and Catherine should live if the marriage is accomplished. Mr. Palmer gives an excellent account of the house, and a still more charming report of Miss Catherine Paschall:

"As for our Usage it was very handsome indeed, and it being a pretty difficult province of a Young Lady who rules her father's house to split the hair between common Courtesie and too much freedome on such an occasion. . . Her Conduct in that respect could not be more Exact, that is, less Forward nor more Obliging. To this her managing of the Table seem'd equal which I never saw more prettily contrived nor more frugally fill'd, and by her manufacture of Wines I could have fancyd myself in Italy, in which we often drank your Lordships. health. As to my nephew's conduct you have read his in hers, for I never saw two Young People on such a design carry themselves in all respects with so exact a decorum. Mr. Pascoall was extremely Courteous, and seems a very Great Husband and Indulgent Father and a good man."

Mr. Palmer concludes that if the marriage is to go on there may be enough "to let them live comfortably, tho' not sumptuously, by which they will learn to use More Well by managing a little, so."

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney

" . . . Sister Alice is here, and by a fortuitous thrust of her backside threw Mirtilla yesterday out of my Mother's Chamber Window

4 Mar.
1707.

8 Apr.
1707.

20 May
1707.

9 Aug.
1707.

into the Courtyard. Great was the Lamentation, but the dog was a little bruised and stun'd with the fall but is pretty well again. . . . Young Sir John Cope &c. are arrived at Edinburgh. They are lodg'd 4 pair of stairs high in the Castle, and were convey'd thither by a Coach and three horses with a postilion, for the honour of Scotland. There has been a Robbery committed at a School house in Fulham; a fellow broke in at a window and an old Gardner without any arms ventured to goe to him, and was shot at, then they struggled and one without fired in at him, but shot his companion through both the legs, after which (the Gardner being run thro' with a sword and shot too) they made a shift to draw the Rogue out of the window where some of his buttons were tore off and left; the Fellow was pursued to D. Buckingham's house by the blood, and there taken, and now in Newgate, but the Gardner died the next day. . . . I forgot to tell you my spouse had a letter from your sister Verney out of Ireland, where all are well, but the new air of Gravity is the mode by the example of their Viceroy, the reverse of the Former.

But I forget all this wile the trespass I commit upon your patience & the Ladies' good nature by interrupting conversation so long together, and therefore referring you to the Little Summer House at the end of the Terras Walk, or if you are inclined to a Promenade to the rising Vista at New Hall, or the more Artless and Enchanting Covert of A Shady Grove or Rambling Thicket, I shall take my leave of you, flourishing on your Flute to serenade your Lady amidst a Chorus of Nightingales, wishing you all many divertive Hours and improving Pleasures."

It is evident that his Uncle's warm sympathy meant a great deal in young Ralph's life; his father was capable of a deep affection, but he could never have written such a letter as the last; "Nightingales" and "Shady Groves" were not at all in his line of business. Indeed, he wrote about this time that Ralph had left Claydon "and is gone a Caterwauling into Essex".

Mrs. Anna Tregea is so persistent in suggesting wealthy matches for Mr. Verney that it is difficult not to suspect that she has some pecuniary interest in these transactions. She hints "under the Rose" that the family she is now mysteriously recommending "Can get my Lord to be made a Baron of England, for the Duck of Montague and the Earl of Kent and my Lord Halafox is ther nere relations, and themselves favourits at Cort, and I am shure it can be Dun."

20 Feb.
1707.

It may be this influence that Aunt Adams refers to when she complains that Lord Fermanagh "is still conferring with Mr. P's enemies".

These elaborate marriage settlements, it seems, had only lately come into fashion, rich people insisting that their sons should wed with heiresses—

As worldlings do, giving the sum of more
To that which had too much.

They called forth a strong protest in the *Tatler* (No. 199) against the long bargaining between the fathers without allowing the two chiefly concerned "the least relish of that exquisite gladness at meeting, that sweet inquietude at parting, together with the charms of voice, look, gesture and that general benevolence between well-chosen lovers, which makes all things please and leaves not the least trifle indifferent."

Lord Fermanagh writes to Mary Lovett in Dublin:

29 Jan.
1708.

"... Your Brother's match Joggs on slowly in the Lawyer's hands, the Wedding Garments are buying & the Coach a making."

Steele asserts that the lawyers made settlements extend to three skins of parchment, and proposes a form of his own to his "clients of the Fair Sex":

"We, John —— and Mary —— having estates for life resolve to take each other. I, John —— will venture my life to enrich thee Mary; and I, Mary —— will consult my health to nurse thee John. To which we have interchangeably set our hands, harts, and seals, this day."

Happily, in spite of bargaining fathers and dilatory lawyers, "John" and "Mary" took their own measures to "enrich each other's lives", and "lived happily ever after"—at all events, they did so at Claydon.

Christenings generally involved large family gatherings; as did also the funerals, unless called "Private" and carried out at night; but wedding days seem not to have been announced beforehand, probably to save expense, and this was the case when Ralph Verney and Catherine Paschall were finally married, at St. Giles' Church, on Feb. 24, 1708. Catherine, born on May Day 1682, was a few months older than her husband.

Baddow Hall, of which Catherine was the heiress, was the principal house in the neighbourhood, and at that time had large estates attached to it. There were rumours that there were underground passages from it to Sanden Church, a mile or so away.

Sir Thomas Cave, whose personal experience supported his words, congratulated Ralph heartily on entering such

"a happy State as Matrimony, and as Words to explain the joying Instincts of my Affection are too few, I'll at once confine my good Wishes to your Desires, and think tis pity to abreviate Such happy Minutes I'll conclude with my Service to you and my Sister, and that I am Ambitious of being, Dr. Sir, Your Affte. Brother & humble Servant."

23 Feb.
1708.

On 1st March 1708, Lord Fermanagh having occasion to write to his Banker, Sir Richard Hoare, mentions casually that—"My Son Verney was married last Tuesday, and I left the Towne on Wednesday morning, so that I was in a great hurry." Cary Stewkley went on the Wednesday to take leave of her cousins, and heard from Aunt Adams, to her great surprise, that the wedding was over, and the family all gone out of town.

28 Feb.
1708.

The bride and bridegroom were reported to be very merry at Baddow Hall. Lord Fermanagh writes to his son a few days later that the papers were not yet completed.

"Its a curse to have dealings with Lawyers, I feare either you or Brother Pascall or both, must make a Journey to London to settle this matter . . . all here remember 'Em to you [including Mary's little three-year-old Elizabeth]. Take Miss Lovett's own word she sends her Duty to her Uncle and Aunt. God bless you and your wife."

3 Mar.
1708.

Mr. Butterfield in April sends up the congratulations of Claydon to the bridegroom:

"Honoured Sir,—I take this Opportunity by the Collonell to present you and your Lady, mine and my wife's harty wishes of all the Comforts and Blessings which the honourable State does afford; and I think from your known good Temper and your Consort's Character, I may, without the Spirit of Prophecy, venture to pronounce you both very happy. I should not have contain'd myselfe thus long, but that we expected you would have spedily followed my Lord to Claydon, and given us the Opportunity of making our Congratulations by word of Mouth; and your sudden retreat from London left no space for it there. . . . Sir, I hope from this Juncture, we may date the Era of a long series of Happiness to you, to which tho' I cannot pretend to add anything, I shall endeavour not to detract wittingly by any undutifull Behaviour of, Hond. Sir, Yours and Your Good Lady's most humble servant,
W. BUTTERFIELD."

20 Apr.
1708.

After the long negotiations Ralph Verney's marriage appeared to give universal satisfaction; Aunt Adams saw her long-wished-for

project accomplished; Lady Abdy hoped to see the Verneys often at Albyns now that they had a fresh tie to the county of Essex. A new Seal, the Paschal Lamb and Flag, a new girlish handwriting, and a new name, Catherine Verney, appear in the correspondence; "Betty V." has gained a sister, and the Honble. Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Verney take their places as a married couple in the family circle.

3 Aug.
1708.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord F.

"I am sent for this day to Chelsea to the Funerall of my Husband's Brother, that lived in Cheapsid, which is the last of those Brothers, he dyed at Earls Court at his Daughter my Lady Blackmore's."

Occasions soon arose which showed the bride's good sense and business ability.

3 Dec.
1708.

*Mrs. Ralph Verney, at Baddow Hall, to her husband, at
Claydon*

"I hope my Dearest Life will get this day safe to Claydon, and I pray God yesterday's fogg mayn't have given thee a sad Cold. Here came about 3 Aclock in the afternoon a Gentleman to speak with you upon earnest busines, He said, & that he lives but few miles from Claydon, but that he came from London yesterday. So my father being in the yard asked him to come in, so he came into the Parlor and I called for some wine. He seemd in a good habit and was a thickset, prety lusty man, I believe had very newly had the Smallpox, for he lookt very redd and much markt, he had a young man with him not a servant, that lookt but ordinary, so we told him you were gon to Claydon, but asking after my Lord and your family I found he knew nothing of them, so I began to mistrust he was some Roagg, so I desired to know his busines sinc you were abroad. He said you were left in trust for one Mr. William Temple and that somebody was sueing the Trustees for the payment of debts. . . . I knew not what to make of this, but saying he lived so near I asked him several questions after the neighbours, and how far Hillsdon was from my Lord's, and he said 8 miles, and he did not know Mr. Butterfield nor could give no account of anybody or things thereabouts. Soe I called out my father and told him I thought he was a cheat and desired him to ask him his name, so when he went in he riss up to goe away, so my Father told him he would beg the favour of his name, but he would not tell him but said twas no matter for his name, he was Imployed by one Mr. Whelam, or some such name of Winslow. I did not ask him to lye here. He was without a wig in black velvet cap and the cape of his

cote buttoned up about his face. I shall long to know if you know anything of him or his business, which is all from thine till Death,
CATHERINE VERNEY.

Pray remember have your Shirts well aired before you put 'Em on."

"I shold be glad to borrow my Lady's pillows, if you think she is free to lend em, because els I must bye and that wold come to a good deal, but if you think I had best to write to her myslf lett me know. . . . Every bit of my heart is with my dearest dear, who while I live am only thine,
C. V."

10 Dec.
1708.

The Christmas holidays of 1708-9 brought a large family party to Claydon, as we learn from Mr. Luttrell's letter.

Francis Luttrell to Lord Fermanagh

31 Jan.
1709.

"My Lord,—Tho' it be too late to wish your Lordship an happy New Year yet I hope it is not too late to make a tender of my respects, your Merits justly claim it, and especially when I have the honour to bear some Relation to you. I have had frequent Notices of your Welfare, which was matter of great satisfaction to me, & shall continue to wish you and my Aunt happy in a long Enjoyment of that Comfort.

As to your Friends, my Father and Mother, they know the worth of what I'm speaking of more now than ever; but why should I dwell on these dolefull Subjects, since Claydon is at this time a Scene of another Sort, as you are all there very merry in the possession of each others' companies. I will not add anything which shall look like an Allay of those pleasures. My Father and Mother have commanded me to communicate the satisfaction they have in that small Present of Oysters (which they lately sent) proving agreeable to their Wishes and doe hope that these 2 Barrells they now desire your and my Aunt's acceptance of will not less answer their Intentions than the former. . . . This night there came news at Squire's Coffee House in Fulwood's Rents that the Preliminaries are signed by the French King. Peace has been long the subject of discourse as well as of the Wishes of this town, and it has been by a great many knowing people judged not to have been far off from us for some time. I hope tis come at last; and then your Lordship's tenants and the Lawyers Clients will have money in their Pockets. My Father and Mother and Self joyn in our humble services to you and my Aunt as also to the Ladies and Gentlemen now under your Lordship's roof, whether related to Us or no, & pray believe me to be Your Lordship's most obliged humble servant,

FRA. LUTTRELL."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

5 Feb.
1709.

"I received the favour of your letter, and with it 2 Barrels of Extraordinary Oysters; they were (as the former) soe large and soe very Good, that surely my Brother Luttrell is owner of the Bank where they are caught, or else he could never have parcells soe choysly cull'd. I want words to express my acknowledgments, to my brother & Mrs. Luttrell; I intreat you to doe it for me."

More grandchildren at Stanford and at Baddow are shortly expected. Lord and Lady Fermanagh are anxiously waiting for Catherine's "Good Houre". Lord Fermanagh writes:

13 Jan.
1709.

"Deare Ralph,—I'me glad the Cradle, the Quilt, and the Baskett, came well to you, there was alsoe a Silk Pillow in the Cradle; I wish my Daughter a good Houre and well layd in Bedd and I hope she'll find a good nurs for the Infant, God's Blessings attend you both."

Mary Lovett from her Irish home sends loving congratulations on her

30 Dec.
1708.

"Sister's thriving condition & hope it will prove a Brave Boy. I desire to offer a small token of an Indian Quilt to cover the Babe in the Craydle . . . I beg you will plead my excuse for offering my poor mite, when I am sure soe many rich & great have been before me, that it was out of my power to offer anything but what she was provided with before."

In February Ralph paid a short visit to Claydon, although his wife was always unwilling to spare him.

16 Feb.
1709.

Ralph Verney to his Wife

"My Deare,—I have only time to tell you that next Friday my Father & I hope to see you at Baddow, we shall ride down but you need not send anybody to meet us. I am glad my father goes down that I may see my Precious againe this week."

It had been a severe winter and in the previous month Lord Fermanagh wrote to a brother Magistrate, Mr. Terryngham, who required his attendance on business.

10 Jan.
1709.

"The five miles betwixt me and Wadsdon not being beaten, I dare not venture throw the deep snow and frost, being in my 69th yeare. A Neighbour of about half that age, by a fall broke his thigh. I am extreamey sorry that I cannot waite on you, and I hope some other Justices that live nearer may attend you."

The cradle, the silk pillow, and the Indian quilt were not destined to be used as yet. We learn from Lord Fermanagh's pocket-book that on March 2, 1709, Catherine "was delivered of a Dead Boy", and for some weeks her health was the cause of much anxiety.

During the winter of 1708-9 both Mrs. Ralph Verney and Mrs. Ralph Palmer were hoping for the safe arrival of a child. When Catherine's baby was born dead, Mr. Palmer was anxious to keep the news from his wife, but "Tom Berry" [whoever he might be] "heard it from my Laundress and inadvertently bawl'd it out to her".

Catherine's disappointment (she is always "Dear Precious" to the Palmers) met with the greatest sympathy at Chelsea. Ralph Palmer writes to his nephew:

"This is a misfortune that has been so often repeated with me that I have not an ordinary Title to preach up resignation, which every day's Experience almost requires in a World that is made up of Hopes and Fears. My Father's Blessing & prayers for you both with my poor Spouse's most cordial Caresses." 3 Mar. 1709.

Elizabeth Verney, at Dublin, to her Brother Ralph, at Baddow 14 May 1709.

"My Deare Brother's letter I received last night, and am truly concerned for your loss, but more that my sister is under so great a weakness . . . the real value and esteem I have for her makes me impatiently desire to hear of her amendment . . . I am sure you are in a great deal of concern and indeed I share in it tho' at a distance, and am heartily sorry for the poor little baby . . . I am mightily obliged to you and my sister for so kindly accepting my small present, which I feare is not worth it, but that you are both so good to take the will for the deed."

Ralph Palmer had written pathetically:

"I pray God my Spouse may have her little one to live with her, that we may add a little to the peopleing this world, as well as the encreasing the Kingdome of Heaven with little Angels." 14 Sept. 1708.

The Palmer baby was happily born, March 21, 1709, and christened Cornelia. Her father reported that she was "a lusty brown-hair'd girl big enough to have been born a boy". She suffered later from convulsions in teething, and though all the dire remedies of blistering, etc., were duly applied, the precious little daughter joined her little sister angels at thirteen months old, April 22, 1710.

5 Mar.
1709.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

"... I had a letter this day from my Daughter Bell (at Baddow) and she sends me word that my Nees Verney has had a good night's rest, and is finely refreshed with it, and all the peopell about her think she will live and I hope will bring you many Grandsons, though now she is very weak, and will be so a long time I feare."

10 Mar.
1709.

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

"I recd. yours of the 7th and am mighty glad my Daur. mends, and did rise, but I think twas very soon, the Bedd might have been made on one side and shee removed to it. It is very cold weather and the ground covered with a big snow."

19 Apr.
1709.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

"... Last week one of my old neibors came from Baddow and tells me she saw my Neece Verney a few days before, and that she looks better then she has done this half-yeare, which news pleased me very well. Sir Ed. Denton and his Lady was here, he thought his Brother Nelly was then on the Irish Seas if the wind did not hinder their intentions."

15 June
1709.

Margaret Adams, from Westminster, to Lord Fermanagh

"We were all at Westminster on Monday, the Cousin Stewkeleyes were indifferent well except Cousin Caroline, and my Cousin Mary Lloyed stayed that day in town on purpose to meet all together; and in the afternoon Sir Tho. and Lady Cave with all her little ones came to see my Cousins, so their little house was never so well filled and all relations. . . . My Lady will have the diversion of the pretty little ones, who goe down tomorrow, and a prettyer humerd Child then Miss Cave I never see, I feare she is so weakly she will scars be reared, but Miss Pen seems more like her Aunt. . . . I heard from Baddow that all was well there, and Cos. Molly Pascall much pleased with her change of habitation, and perhaps her going may doe that service to make her more easy then she was before in the familly."

In April Lady Fermanagh is suddenly very anxious about her husband, and writes to Ralph at Baddow:

3 Apr.
1709.

"Dear Mr. Verney,—I have only time to tell you that my Lord is very ill of an intermitting feavour, Dr. Frampton is here and gives hopes he will do well; but at present my Lord is very bad; I could not sattisfie myselfe without your knowing of it; Lady

Cave and Sir Tho. are here, and poor Lady she is in great concern and not willing to leave my Lord, tho' her time is so near. All here are yours but non more than Dear Sir, your Afft. Mother till death,
E. FERMANAGH."

Lord Fermanagh recovered sooner than his anxious wife expected. Dr. M. Frampton, of Oxford, writes to Lady Fermanagh prescribing some of the usual terrible remedies, but the patient is to be allowed "some Chicken at noon", and to drink a glass or two of strong wine with it. 6 Apr. 1709.

Lady Cave's baby, born in London, was quite prosperous, but she herself made a slow recovery.

Mrs. Ralph Verney desires to know "how long a stay her husband intends to make in town because Cousen Jak (Pascall) designs to meet you in order to beg the favour of you to go with him to help him bye such a cheap Sute of Cloths as yours." 22 Apr. 1709.

Lord Fermanagh to Mrs. Vickers

22 May
1709.

"Deare Cousin,—My own illness and the concern I have for Pegg Cave hath a long time hindered me from writing to you, but I hope the worst is past with her, but I am glad your spouse Christened the Child." (This child was Penelope, born on April 30 in Cecil Street, Strand, and christened by the Rev. William Vickers.) "Gossips its Great-Grandfather Ralph Palmer; Mrs. Catherine Verney, for whom stood Elizabeth Adams; and Mistress Penelope Cave."

Before leaving Town, Lady Cave visited the Stewkley sisters, who had moved from Islington to Westminster.

Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon, to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

22 May
1709.

"Deare Ralph,—I perceive by yours of the 18th that both you and my Daur. have made a tripp to London, where your stay was very short, I wish you had come on another days Journey, that is to Claydon. Pray give my thanks for the Salmon, which was excellent good; I much rejoice she is so well and that she hath consulted Dr. Chamberlain, I wish she had asked him whether it was not needful for her to go to the Bath. . . . Pray both of you consider well of this Matter as a business of great Importance to us all. . . . As to the occurences of our County, Mr. Price is shortly to be married to the Chester family and his Mother to Dr. Rivers of Oxford; there is a Gentn. in love with Mr. Price's Daur., his father is a merchant and hath sent for the young man on that occasion.

Sill is to marry J. Rogers's Daur., and they are to live at Thrup Castle and the owner Sir Peter Tyrell is to board with Sill. J. Rogers's Son is also on marriage with the Daur. of a Cittizen. I'm sorry for the ill news that is come from Portugal and that Brigr. Thomas Pearce is a Prisoner. His sister had 3 Doctors, Chamberlain, Garth and Friend. They mistook the Distemper, she dying of an Impostume in her Stomach."

26 Aug.
1709.

Catherine Verney, at Baddow, to her husband

"My Dear Love,—The day you went came a letter from Sir Tho. Cave to my Cos Jak that he had set up by his Carrier six dogs to Smith's; so I did not know how to get em down, for Matt had never been in town, so I thought it the cheapest way to send Fisher a foot to lead them down, so I agreed with him for a Crown so I was at no other Charge only 6d. for a liver for ther diner; but Smith writ to me and says that one of them got away from his master upon the road and is lost, and Cos Jak thinks some of these are not like those he sent word of. . . . A man has come to bye the house . . . but my Father and I have faln out most sadly about it, I was sure he woud ask so much more than anything was worth that he would obstruct the sale of everything. . . . Here has been Mrs. Houghton and Mrs. Comgs. and Mrs. Mildmay, Mrs. Waterson. Sir Robt. Abday dined at Mr. Hawker's that day with the Bishop and sent in the afternoon to know how we did, but did not come up, so I fancy he is angry with the Little Lady. The Prisoner that was condemned and desired to be alone was to dye today and last night he desir'd to have a candle, and though he had nothing but a knife yet in the night he cut a hole through a vast thick planck and broke off his Irons and ran away. I am very sorry for Dick Cruch for tis said he will loose his place. . . . Lady Cardigan is brought to bed of a dead child. Dr. Shadwell gave her a vomit six weeks before her time. . . . My lord threatens to stab him whenever he meets him, but the Roman Catholicks all say tis a judgement upon him for turning Herritck. . . . Pray make what hast ever you can home, for I want you more than I can express, who am, my Dearest, only thine,

CATHERINE VERNEY."

30 Aug.
1709.

Catherine Verney, at Baddow, to her husband, in London

[There is a question of their letting or selling a Brick House, which is part of Ralph's property.] ". . . My father went to Bush Fair but bought nothing, all was so very dear we could have got nothing by 'Em. He bid eight score pounds for forty Bullocks but could not have them. Mr. Bishop and his son came down here last night and says the Markets are pretty good and will hold so a little

while, but my Father won't send the beasts till you come to town. . . . So I ask 'Em to carry 'Em into Smithfield on Friday come sennight; so you must be sure to tell me whether you will be in town or not, although I have no patience you should stay any longer, therefore I desire you would come, for I have noe comfort for my life while you are away. I am very well yet, but I fret myself to pieces for one thing or other that I can't send you word on. Sir Robert Abdy has sent a haunch of Venison. . . . The wheat was all got in on Saturday very well, and they will make an end of the Oates tomorrow, and they say they must get the fallows ready before they goe for Coales. We have not been out once, only one night after a very wet day we went about an hour to Mrs. Vooksby's and I know not whenever we shall have the Coach againe, and I am afraid to ride a hors back at present. The prisoner that broke out of Jale, Abram Wood and another man took a-going into Onger and had five pund apiece for taking him. I sent my Aunt Adams the ginue, but I have got but five partrig so I don't send them to Chelsea till I got six. Cousin Jack has sold his mare at Bush Fair for 8 pounds; so now I have sent my Deare all the news I know. . . . Pray don't fail to write to me on Sunday for if the Bullocks goe Nat Brown won't know what to do with 'Em.—I am, my Dearest Love, only thine while I live, sincerely affect. wife & Servt.,

CATHR. VERNEY."

Bath was held to be the panacea for all kinds of ailments; and possibly the greater range of interests, including some good music, plays, and the complete change of company, had a good deal to do with the improvement in health. Certainly the happy account which Lady Cave sent to her father in the autumn of 1709 must have increased his liking for Bath.

Lady Cave, from Bath, to Lord F.

3 Sept.
1709.

" . . . I defer'd writing till I had had some tryall of the waters. I find the good effects of Em chiefly in creating a much better appetite than I had before, and the effect is general in our family. I have got Betty to drinck but a small quantity, for she is mighty brisk and well, and has been once in the Cross Bath, which at first goeing in was a surprise to her and occasioned some tears, but was after very well pleased, and is to bathe about twice a week for six or eight times, which they say is enough for her. This town is extream full of company, and highly entertained with Singing and Musick, by the famous Nicoleno & Valentinio, besides plays, baths, puppet-shows, ladder Danceing, &c., and some gameing, but I don't see much of that, high amongst the Ladies, being but few of Quality at this place now. I sometimes take the air on horseback,

and other's [wise] am a gazeing Spectator to their diversions, but shall receive much greater satisfaction if our friends from Claydon favour us with their company after our return home, as is most heartily wished and desired by, Sir, your dutiful and obedient daughter, M. CAVE."

Catherine writes:

11 Sept.
1709.

"My Dearest,—I hope to hear today you got safe to your Journey's end and found all well. I have sent a pattern of the Cloth with an account of all you needed to buy, for here is enought of your best coloured cloth to make one Coate, and there is enought of the worst coloured cloth to make 'Em all four wascotes and brichis, and Mr. Gurney says that Cloth briches will last a yeare very well. I think we had better use it for that purpos and not buy shag, soe you need buy but nine yards of this coloured cloth, but pray let it be as bright, and I think we used to have a finer cloth for the same price. Mr. Gurney says shalloon is much better to line them then padway and he says they cost no more a yd. I think you had better buy it white instead of blue becaus it will look livelier, and their briches will now be the same as the outsides. Here is silk and Mohair enough, soe in the note is all you need buy besides the lace. I heartily wish you may see a horse to your likeing; a vast deal of Company at Bistow [Bicester] race, Sir Willm. Glin being very near killed, he was beat off his hors by a Coach and Six but by meer providence saved. Our greatest news is the woods have been all searcht for Iron Cap; at last they found him in a cave he used to frequent and stript him of all his rags, drest him in a handsom suit of mourning, and carryed him away in a coach; they say he had a relation dead whereby several thousands is fallen to him; his name they say is John Savidge. . . . The post stays, so with duty and all servis as due, I am my Dearest Love's till Death, C. V."

Elizabeth writes one of her rare letters to her brother on her return to Claydon.

27 Oct.
1709.

". . . I am glad to hear you have lost your Cough and look so well, but sorry your Journey out of town was hasten'd by my Sister's Indisposition, which I hope by this time is quite off. I should mightily rejoyce to have your Companys either here or att Stanford if it was convenient, and were I guided by my own Inclinations I would wait on you both att Baddow, but you know I am under Government, and soe must comply; but I hope one time or another I may be so happy to compass my desire. This family salutes you, and I am, with the greatest respect to all, Deare Brother, yours sincerely, E. VERNEY."

Lady Fermanagh writes to congratulate Ralph that his wife has again the hope of a child.

"If you should have the least occasion for the Ass, you would not fail to send for it, for there is nothing at Claydon but is at your Service. . . . Poor Barton was buried last night, Mr. Challoner preached his Sermon, and he lyes in the Chancell at Steeple Claydon."

3 Oct.
1709.

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

5 Dec.
1709.

"I am glad to hear all our Friends at Baddow are well and that Mr. Pascall's leg amends. Lady Fermanagh with the rest of our good Company are still here, but talk of going the middle of this week. We shall greatly want 'em, having been very merry and the Soldier does not a little divert us."

Lord Fermanagh writes:

"Deare Ralph,—Wee have this day eaten your Brawn, which is Excellent good as ever was eat; I wish the Queen a taste on't and then noe doubt but she that made it would have a pattent to serve her Majesty's table with that delicate dish. Well! again we thank you for it. Herewith I send you half-a-Doe; we are all well here and want nothing but your and your Deare's Company. Everyone here wishes a Merry Christmas to you and all your Family. God bless you."

Xmas
Day 1709.

" . . . I have sent to some of the freeholders and they say they will be sure to vote as you doe and I will send to the rest. Mat Brown and James has both votes. I hope to let the little house in the Churchyard to Will Bruer for forty shillings a year. Last Monday hear came Lord and Lady Petre and hee is indeed a very pretty gentleman, he said he was mighty sorry you was from home but he hoped you would not stay long for he much desires to meet you a hunting; he had yet got no dogs of his own and he loved all sorts of country sports."

15 Sept.
1710.

Catherine, still intolerant of Ralph's absence, has more commissions to give him.

"I sent up to Aunt Adams the mantle to be scowrd and desired her to look if the curtains of the cradle does not want it and for some blankets and odd things I could not shift without. . . . I would also bye a pare of glass sconces for the side of a chimney, and pray bye me half a pound of coffe, it was but eight shillings a pound a fortnight agoe, so now I think it is cheaper. . . . I long to see my Precious, which is all the comfort of thy very good wife,
C. V."

The General Election being imminent, Ralph is wanted to vote in Essex, and also to help with his father's election in Bucks.

29 Sept.
1710.

" . . . The writs being out for the new Parliament our Election is to be next Tuesday come three weeks, and I find all the gentlemen much expect your coming home to be at it and I believe will think you stay away by design if you do not. However, I don't pretend by this to direct my Dear, who is a much better Judge in these affairs than I, only I thought it was impossible for you at that distance to know the Sentiments of these people. My opinion is it would be handsomest if you came home and went again at my lord's election, but pray doe as you think best . . . and now my Dear I hope you will not think I advise your coming home ether to avoyd my journey to Claydon or that I am not thankful for my obligation to my lord in being welcomed ther, I only defer my journey till I have an answer from you."

2 Oct.
1710.

" . . . I hope you will set out on the 10th October at farthest for home, for I can't see except inclination that anything can occasion your longer stay, it being now almost 7 weeks since I saw you. . . . If you think at all of this place you must recollect that you can't but be wanted, for it is impossible to doe bricklairs work in winter. There is a good deal to doe at the house the Miller has taken, and besids twenty more things too long to name." [A cow has died and there are many questions about the home farm.] "Mr. Pugh's house was beset 3 times last week, they saw nine men and one woman. They let off a blunderbus the last time which rais'd the town but could not take any of them."

The year ends cheerfully after a Christmas party at Baddow. Daniel Baker writes to Ralph:

17 Jan.
1710.

"Deare Sir,—Our Journey home was as prosperous and pleasant as we could have wished, barring the regrett of having left so good company behind us . . . we got hither before the Night and with as good Appetites as a Fox-Hunter that has fasted ten hours for his sport."

The next spring found Catherine the happy mother of a baby girl, born May 2nd, 1710, in Southampton Street, Covent Garden; christened Elizabeth three days later, in the house, by Mr. Vickers. "Gossips: the Grandfather, Henry Pascall; Lady Fermanagh, for whom stood Elizabeth Verney; and Mrs. Gibbs, for whom stood Elizabeth Adams."

When Ralph and Catherine were married, Catherine was the better "man" of the two; with much more knowledge of house-keeping and of estate management. But as the time went on, his father and uncle rejoiced together that Ralph had learnt so much

from his happy marriage, and cared for matters in which he had never before taken any interest.

Catherine Verney to her husband, from Baddow

11 Sept.
1710.

"My Dearest,—I recd. yours yesterday and rejoyce att your comeing home. . . . I supose you'll remeber to bye the Cloth for the Liverys, and a hatt for Robin and one for Mat. I supose you will edge the hats. The things we want is Stove to burn Coals in the Little Parlor and a Coal Basket . . . a pound of Coffee, be suer don't forget that, and also two pound of salt Petre and one pound of Salt Pronella, & one pnd. of Citron and half a pnd. of Oring and half a pnd. of Lemon Peeles, and a Brush to rubb the great Parlor. The Gentleman has been hear agane about the Brick House but stays till you come home. The Maier [mare] at Wribble is not well of her lameness yet. I will say no more now only I pray God send us a happy meeting and I am your truley loveing Wife,

CATH. VERNEY.

Bye some writing paper and a few Smelts." [Awkward travelling companions!]

CHAPTER XII

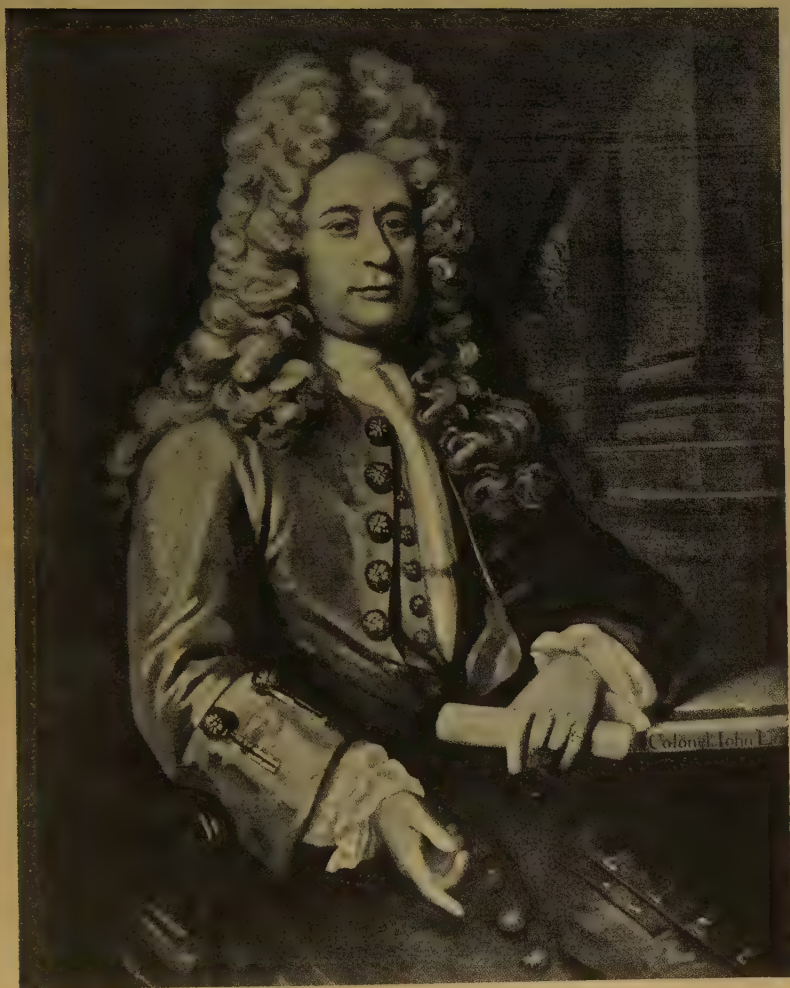
COLONEL LOVETT AND HIS LIGHTHOUSE

To make out the history of a family from their letters, is to meet with fresh figures who suddenly occupy the front of the stage without any introduction, and the chronicler is denied the privilege of the novelist, who can invent suitable antecedents. Such a figure is Colonel John Lovett "of Iorland". We know nothing of the services which gave him his military rank, or how, with a good Irish property, a seat in the Irish House of Commons, and an assured position in Dublin society, he came to acquire the Eddystone Rock, and to make the erection there of an enduring lighthouse the main interest of his life.

And yet Colonel John ought not to have been a stranger. The Lovetts were amongst the oldest families in Bucks, but possibly the fact of the most prominent member of the family, Sir Christopher Lovett, having settled in Ireland, and the owner of Liscombe being at that time non-resident, had made the name less familiar than it should have been to the younger generation of the Verneys.

Colonel John Lovett is working in connection with Trinity House, and requires the sanction of an Act of Parliament that a fee may be levied on the ships that the Light is to serve, as they enter Plymouth. A private Bill was ever subject to much expense and delay, which kept him waiting in London. His plans are referred to as a national benefit and a great work.

The first lighthouse, a fantastic erection of wood and stone, was swept away, with its unhappy designer, Winstanley, as already described, in the great storm of 1703, but it would seem that a scheme for another lighthouse was in Colonel Lovett's mind before this time. While waiting about in London he met Mary Verney and fell deeply in love with her, and the letters take up the story some weeks after their marriage in July 1703, when his business at length allowed him to take her to his home.



Colonel John Lovett.

Mary was to travel the long journeys to and from Dublin as a widow in later years, in danger, trouble and weariness, but the future was then mercifully unknown, and never for a moment anticipated. Her first journey as a bride was a gay adventure, and she was proud to show her devoted husband what a hardy traveller she could be, and how little she minded the discomforts of the way. They started a large party from Claydon; the rector, Mr. Butterfield, had a mind to take a trip in such good company. He had almost as many daughters as Lady Gardiner, of whom only one had left home. Susannah, the eldest (*b.* 1683), had been married two years previously to Henry Smith, of Dublin, who was often a letter-carrier between Ireland and Claydon. The rector promised his wife only to go as far as Chester, their first serious halt, where the Lovetts expected to cross from the mouth of the Dee, or, if this proved impracticable, to get saddle horses for the further 87 miles to Holyhead by the coast road, which, with the river to cross at Conway and the rocky bluff at Penmaenmawr, was a difficult, often a dangerous journey.

A rough sheet of paper was got at Chester, which the husband and wife shared to send the first news to her home. They had rested at Warwick, at the Welsh Harp, and at Whitchurch.

Mary Lovett to Lord F.

4 Sept.
1703.

"... We are all well at Chester, from whence we hope to goe presently eight miles off and take shiping if we can get room, for they say it was never known the ships to be so full; there is 6 Ladys of Quality and a Lord gone down and wate there, ready for the ships going off, with abundance more passengers; it is said their goods is worth at least thirty thousand pounds. Mr. Butterfield is with us, and very well ... pray tell Mrs. Butterfield not to expect him till she sees him."

Col. Lovett to Lord F.

4 Sept.
1703.

"... We found here my Lady Betty Butler, Major-Genll. Stewart and his Lady, my Ld. Bellew, my Lady Lansberrow, Col. St. George and his Lady. It's so full that little or no conveniences is to be had, besides having noe convoy. If they doe goe they will call at Holly Head, where is expeacted a Convoy. The weather being fine and having gott good horses, I believe tomorrow we will make the Best of our way thither and soe stay for a good Opportunity. . . .

I hope I am in time enough for the Election and at Hollyhead I hope to find a man-of-war.

P.S. Since the above I find the winds Cross, soe that I believe my Lady Betty may stay some time."

Lady Betty being the daughter of the Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Ormond, was a passenger of some importance.

A still rougher piece of paper and very pale ink was procured at Holyhead, where they were just in time to catch "A yatch" sailing the next day.

6 Sept.
1703.

Col. Lovett to Lady F., from Holyhead

"... On Saturday at 3 o'clock we left Chester to stay at Hollywell the night. Yesterday morning we Breakfasted with Sir John Conaroy, where we were very kindly and handsomely recd., and Lay last night at Bangor, and this day came here very well, and tomorrow hope to go for Dublin. Lady Betty Butler was at Chester before we left Claydon, and I believe we shall be at Dublin before she leaves Chester. Travelling agrees very well with my Dearest Life, but she is very much tired and is going to bed."

Mr. Butterfield puts in his word:

"Deare Mistresse,—I am now got as far as my Mare will carry me, the next Intelligence will be from Dublin or from Calais, if the Haddocks don't catch me. . . . I will be the messenger within a week or ten days and hope to bring you a good account from your daughter, in the meantime take care of yourself and family and the Church, with all due respect be assured I am alike in all places,
yours, W. BUTTERFIELD."

Mary will not let the composite letter go off without a word from her, to assure

"My Dearest Mother, that my Claydon friends are never out of my mind. It is now late at night, and I have rid from Chester to this place in two dayes, so that my bones are very stiff and the packet just a-going out. . . . My Deare Mother your most obedient daughter till death,
MARY LOVETT.

P.S. Mr. Butterfield is going to Dublin, soe he will take it as a favour if you will read the above letter to his wife."

8 Sept.
1703.

Mary Lovett to Lady F., from Dublin

"Honoured Mother,—After travelling a long horseback journey I gave you an account of my being well at Holyhead. . . . We ware

all very seasick, but are now very well again, we had a very good passage for we ware over in about 8 hours, but we lay still in the night which made us the worse sick, for then the ship tossed mightily about for the wind was very high. Mrs. Tempest, Cousin Lloyd, and several others, came to meet me when the yoatch came in, believing I had been there, but it was impossible for there was above 150 passingers in her before I came to Chester, so I liked where I came much better, because I had the best conveniences. I have had my Mother Lovett and Fanny, and Mrs. Tempest and Cousen Lloyd, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Dobings, with me today, and my Cousen Boate sent her man to me. I hope in my next to give you some account how I like this place, what I see of it is very pretty. Mr. Butterfield is very much pleased with his journey, and his daughter as well pleased, she was very much surprised to see him. Mr. Lovett is gone out and is very busy about his Election, soe I shall have but little of his Company till this matter is over. Every hour of the day I wish my dear Friends from Claydon with me, then I should be the happiest woman in this world, and I hope to be that happie one for I assure you the Journey is nothing if the mind is good . . . I drinke nothing but wine and water, and it agrees with me very well, my Cousen Lloyd is very kind in giving me good advice, how to take care of myself, but I need it not for I have a Deare Friend which does it for me. We fared very well in our journey, we bought Salmons, three quarters of a yard long for sixpence, and Souls half a yard long for three pence. We took good store of meat and drinke to sea with us, but never touched a bit, we were all soe sick."

We hear incidentally of the blank caused by Mary's departure. Lady Gardiner writes with some severity to Lady Fermanagh, that she had expected daily to have news of the travellers:

" . . . But I find, Madam, that Youth and plenty and Jollyty hinders you from casting A Letter on your old and Afflicted Relation in all respects, who cannott long troble you . . . I have rit to my Lord at the Bath where I hope hee will injoy his helth and by so much good company pas over his extraordinary grefe for the parting of his Daughter." 23 Sept.
1703.

Colonel Lovett had taken a lease for some 35 years of a house at Kilrudery, from Lord Meath, with whom they were on most friendly terms. This was to be their summer home, and they had a house in Dublin for the winter. Her cousin sends an account of the bride to Claydon.

24 Sept.
1703.

Mary Lloyd to Lord F.

"... My Cousin Lovett has gone to Kilrudery, and if, as I told her, she wou'd have a care as to cold, and use a little self-denial as to fruit and malt drink, I don't doubt but that the Irish air and her constitution will agree very well. She's gon into the country for as short a stay as she pleases, she seems to have very good thoughts of Dublin. Several Ladys of the best rank have been to visett her, and your Ldsp. must give me leave to assure you upon five yeares experience, that I never yet saw that place in which there is more genteel people, and such as live after the handsomest manner than in Dublin, for its bigness. I ought to beg your pardon, my Ld. for ingaging so much of your time in trifles of this nature."

Mr. Butterfield, who was only waiting for a fair wind to return to his duties, sails with his pockets full of letters for Claydon, and in charge, besides, of Colonel Lovett's two boys (by his first marriage) Robert and Christopher, who were to stay at Claydon on their way to Eton College.

24 Sept.
1703.

*Colonel Lovett to Lord F., from Kilrudery (in Mr.
Butterfield's pocket)*

"... Our arrival has been such a hurry with the Election and Company that I have not had one quiet moment till I came here . . . I can never own the obligation to you for your Daughter, all I can say I will take care of her and do everything in my power to make her happy. I thank God she seems soe, and both travelling by Land and Water did agree with her. I never knew her look so well, and as you have given me a Jewel, which I vallew beyond the World, so I will take all the care of her possible Mortall can, to the Last moment of my Life."

18 Oct.
1703.

Mary is in Dublin in October, seeing to their winter home; she has met the Bishop of Waterford, who boarded in the same house with her father at the Bath, and has got welcome news of him. Lord Fermanagh is "infinitely obliged to my Sister Lovett for all her care and kindness to my deare daughter."

15 Nov.
1703.

Mary Lovett to Lord F., from Dublin

"... I am come to my new house in Dublin and am almost settled, my Mother is gone to the Blind Key, she is mightily kind and fond of me, and the fondest mother of Mr. Lovett that ever I see; I think she is very much ronged in her Carracter, for I think she is a mighty good woman, I have all the reason in the world to

say so of her, and indeed of everybody, for nobody can be treated more civilly than I am amongst them."

The prejudice against Mrs. Lovett in Dublin society is not hard to account for. She was Frances O'More of Raheen, descended from a determined set of Irish "rebel-chiefs" from Elizabeth's time onwards, and the last of the family, Rory O'More, though he was called the most humane of the Irish leaders, boasted that he had assisted in thirteen risings against the English rule. He died in 1652.

"... Pray give my humble duty to my Deare Mother whom I will ever acknowledge to be one of the best and tenderest mothers that ever was born."

Colonel Lovett has charged Mr. Butterfield not to allow his sons to be troublesome at Claydon. He writes later:

"I am very much obliged to you and my Lady for your favour and kindness to my two boys, and in carrying them back to Eaton after the Christmas Holidays, being so far away, I can only say you heap kindnesses on me." 19 Feb. 1704.

¹The records of the Eton School Office about 1700 seem to be scanty, but Robert and Christopher Lovett were in the school in 1708-9, and Christopher went on to Trinity College, Dublin, in 1711. It was a proof that "Eton manners" were very courteous then as now, that the boys wrote to Lady Fermanagh after their visit, which was much appreciated.

Lord Fermanagh could give the boys a good report in the letter which crossed their father's:

"Your sons (from whom my wife had lately a letter) are very well at Eaton; they were no trouble to us, but carried themselves very orderly and well. They hope they shall come hither again and so do Wee. . . . All your acquaintance in these parts are indifferent well—Some grumbling for lack of health—some at the times—and some at both; these things ever were and ever will be, for the whole race of mankind cannot alwayes enjoy health and all other felicities." 8 Feb. 1704.

To Mary he writes:

"I knowe it's a Generall opinion that absence lessens affection, but in me I find the Contrary. If it is possible to love you more than I did, then certainly I doe soe, and I'me confident you have too much understanding to doubt it, therefore I shall say no more."

¹ Note from A. C. Baker, Esq., School Clerk, Eton College.

*Mary Lovett to Lord F., from Dublin*17 Mar.
1704.

"... I fear Mr. Lovett's business in this Kingdome has bin so long neglected that it will be very ill convenient for him to leave it this year, and indeed he has provided everything so handsome for me here, that I should be the worst of women if I did not study everything that is advantagious to him, he is one of the tenderest husbands in the world to me. . . . I think of going into the country next week for some part of the summer till I come to towne to lye inn. If It please God I have a boy I hope you will honour it by giving it a name, I should be glad to Know which you most approve of, either John or Verney."

Her father replies :

"If I be a Godfather to your Infant, give it what name you please. . . . I hope you'll have a boy but if a Girl it's welcome." He sends her "a present of Clouth."

Colonel Lovett writes that he has brought his Dearest Life to town, and that everything she could want for her "Lying-in" has been found in the box of family presents.

"It was delayed at Chester a great while, waiting for a wind."

4 July
1704.

"As to Mr. Cheret, I could not serve him, for I would have no quarrel with so near a relation to Lt. Genll. Earle, who is a perticular friend of mine. We hope soon to see my Bror. Ned, we hear he is malincoly since the loss of his books and papers, as he thinks puts him back two or three years."

Mary is thinking much of her expected baby.

"I am sure I shall want for nothing, that can be done for me, and rely wholly on God to bring me through what he hath appointed for me, which I heartily Pray I may submit to as I ought."

Colonel John Lovett writes a few days later to Lord Fermanagh:

15 July
1704.

"... I thank God this afternoon about 4 o'clock your Daughter made you a Grandfather, but itt is a girle. . . . I sent for my Mother and those that we thought convenient . . . we are all very happy, we only want the sattisfactions of our Relations and friends, but hope next Summer we shall meet."

The baby was christened Elizabeth; "Gossips Mrs. Lovett, Lady Fermanagh, with the Col. and Ralph Palmer Senr." Lord Fermanagh sends hearty congratulations and tells Mary that all is

well at Stanford, where Margaret's first baby is six months old, and they are living "Happily and plentifully together".

In November Colonel Lovett has gone to London about the Lighthouse business, having settled Mary in Dublin; little Bess is left with her nurse at Kilrudery, "thinking the country air Best for her she thrives mightily". But Colonel Lovett adds that her mother is so devoted to her that she can hardly bear to leave her.

"The Duke of Ormond has landed after a long stay at Holyhead, by reason of the stormy weather. . . . My Br. Ned Lovett is with me till he can get convenient Lodgings, he was yesterday called to the Barr." 18 Nov. 1704.

Mrs. Tempest and Cousin Lloyd are within ten doors of Mary, and are very good neighbours.

Lord Fermanagh replies he hopes they will see Brother Lovett Lord Chancellor.

The Lovetts spent the next winter at Claydon.

Lord F., at Claydon, to Col. Lovett, at London.

6 Nov.
1705.

". . . If your business calls you to Trinity House, and you see Capt. John Haslewood, give him my Service, and tell him I hope and doubt not but hee will doe you all the favour and kindness he can (in the Lighthouse business), for my sake. . . . But I believe he don't know me by my Title, soe you must tell him my name, who was an owner of his Shipp Asia to the last of her."

On Sunday, December 4, Mary's eldest boy was born at Claydon, and christened Verney on the 8th. "Gossips, Ed. Brabazon, Earl of Meath (for whom stood Ralph V.), Lord Fermanagh, and Mrs. Lettice Piggott."

While Mary Lovett and her baby boy were being cherished at Claydon House, Colonel Lovett was up and down to London, doing his father-in-law's business as well as his own.

Lord Fermanagh to Col. Lovett

13 Jan.
1706.

"I'me very glad your business in the House of Commons hath mett with so quick a despatch as I read by the Notes, and I hope the finishing of that affaire in both Houses will be as prosperous as the beginning hath been. As you go to Westmr. pray send the enclosed letter for my Brother Richard Lawley, he lives 4 or 5 miles out of Towne, but his Mother will convey it to him. It requires no hast, nor doth what follows, to pay nine shillings and

sixpence to Mr. Thomas Smith the Grocer in James Street, Covent Garden. It is for Garden Seeds."

17 Feb.
1706.

"... I'm sorry to hear your Bill hath mett with delayes, which I feare is occasioned by sum back friends, yet my hopes are you'll overcome those difficultyes and that twill pass this Session. My Daughter is well, but doth not write to you by this post, being I doe, the Children are also both well and here all give you their service, as doth your lov. Father,
FERMANAGH."

Mary is with her husband in London, and writes to her father at Claydon:

26 Mar.
1706.

"... I have been at the House of Lords to see the Queen pass the Bills, which indeed is A very fine sight, and it was the more soe to me Mr. Lovett's Bill being one of them."

Lady Fermanagh is with her, and requires the "pattarn of the shift sleeve that is cut in a paper in the frame draw of her Chest of drawrs."

The following spring Mary writes from Dublin:

26 Mar.
1707.

"... I should be very glad my boy were wean'd, if he be not, my mother desires it should be on Good Friday, I think there is an old wife's saying on that, I am very much ashamed of the trouble they put my mother Lady Fermanagh and you to, my mother is very impatient to see him, and is always saying how much he would divert her, if I would but send for him, for she is mighty fond of little Boys. On the Queen's Birthday, there was a fine song at the Castle at eleven in the morning, where there was all the Beaux and fine Ladys in town, and we amongst the rest; and indeed my Sister was one, for she was all in new Cloths and made A very handsome Appearance, in the afternoon we went to the Play and at night to the fireworks, there was noe Ball, because we have no Government."

11 June
1707.

Lord F. to Mrs. Lovett

"... As to your babes here, they are now both very well, but the history of your boy's late illness is too long for me to tell, so I leave that to my wife and Mrs. Pearce to relate to you. As to foreign news, none of late comes but what is badd, which damps our Beaux so much that they are not the subjects they were of home talk. Jerry Bird died in Spain before the unfortunate battle of Almanza. ... I sent to know of Mr. Jess how the Lighthouse went on, and he said it went forward very well, which good news I was very glad to hear for the Colonel's sake."

Mary Lovett announces to her father the death of Mrs. Smith: ". . . My sister and I went up to her burial which was very handsome." A few weeks later a second son was born to Mary in Dublin, June 30, 1707, christened John. "Gossips, Judge Coote, Mr. Wayer, and Elizabeth Verney."

4 June
1707.

In September 1707 Colonel Lovett is again in England paying up Mr. Rudyerd's account; the latter "has had the help of a Guardship all the summer which has been very serviceable, and the Sea Commanders and others are very satisfied with the progress of the work."

7 Sept.
1707.

In the spring of 1708 he reports to Lord Fermanagh that "Mr Rudyard has been on the Rock and found everything as he left them, and all this winter has not done him a Penny damage; his man of war is ready at his command, and he has had his orders to have what men and stores he needs out of 'Her Majties. Yard, Plymouth, soe that he wants nothing but good weather'."

25 Mar.
1708.

Mary Lovett to Lord F., from London

25 Mar.
1708.

[She has received the news of her brother Ralph's marriage.] ". . . I think the Wedings goe on Briskly this Lent, and indeed hear is one that is A great mortification to all her friends, which is good Mrs. Tempest, for she has at last given herself and liberty to her Cousen Germain, Mr. Arthur Ormsby, we were all mightily surprised, but we consider she was A widow who very seldome doe well for themselves. Pray Sir let my Cousin Lloyd know this, your telling her of it will moderate the consern she will be in. Poor Fanny Lovett died a fortnight ago, her Grandmother is in great greif for her, she being a good companion to her. . . . Verney is grown one of the finest Boys in Ireland, and is as bold as A Lion, and talks everything. I hope little Betty will be a good child, and hope now she will begin to have sense and mind to be Obedient to you and my Mother, to whome I am extreemly Oblidged for all her kindnesses to her. . . . My sister's company makes me not so sencesible of the loss of good Mrs. Tempest, I fear now I shall have but little of her. . . . Her sister Mrs. Usher is in very great trouble for her disposing so indifferently of herself."

Colonel Lovett, in London, to Lord F.

1 May
1708.

". . . I have been so bissey at Trinity House with Setteling the Methods and way of Instruction and Deputations with the advice of Sir Edward Northey, that I have not finished with the African Company. Thank God all things goes well at the Eddystone, and

if Mr. Rudyerd has 8 or 10 days more good weather, you will see it in the Gazett. Tell Deare Bess her Pearle Necklas is come, and I will send or bring it with me, I intend to give the Comrs. of the Revenue a Dish of Meate, because I am to have from them A Letter to all the Collectors which will be of Servis."

Rudyerd's name comes into the letters without any explanation. The Bishop of Portsmouth, who with his brother, Sir Verney Lovett, now represents the Lovett family, has been good enough to supply the following particulars:

"The architect selected by Colonel Lovett was a certain John Rudyerd, whose origin was exceedingly humble but who possessed unquestionable genius. He was born in Cornwall, his father being a miner there, and his brothers are described as a worthless set of ragged beggars. What brought him to London, or how he improved his position in the world, is not now known, but in the beginning of the 18th century he is established as a silk mercer in Ludgate hill; Colonel Lovett is a frequent inmate of his house, and he speaks of Rudyerd as 'my friend of long acquaintance'. . . . Rudyerd proved his efficiency by building a Lighthouse which in some respects earned the warm approbation of Smeaton, his successor. 'Rudyerd's method of keying and securing is a material accession in the practical part of engineering, furnishing us with a secure method of fixing ring-bolts, stancions, etc., into rocks of any known hardness'.

His method of securing the building to the Rock was to cut dove-tailed holes in the latter into which strong iron bolts were keyed. He avoided the open gallery and projections of Winstanley's Lighthouse. The material used was wood, with Cornish moorstone for ballast, and this wood proved the ultimate ruin of an otherwise brilliant achievement. The whole work has been described as an exceedingly clever piece of shipbuilding."

Rudyerd's friendship with the Lovett family did not survive the disaster of his employer's death, but that is a later story.

A paper by Sir Edward Northey explains the tolls to be levied as a Duty arising from a Benefit received. Col. Lovett writes again to his father-in-law:

22 June
1708.

"... By Mr. Rudyerd's last Letter he has finished all the Sollid part, which is now 42 foote high, which is 36 above High Water Marck. . . . I have finished all matters with the Trinity House, as to the Methods of the Deputation and Instructions, Receipts, etc.; I have Sir Ed. Northey's opinion and I hope to have Mr. Cooper's to Back it, and hope in the beginning of next month to goe on my Western Jorney."

"... I expect to hear from Mr. Rudyerd that he has fixed his Lights, for I have sent them down what other things he wanted from hence. . . . We think it not so well to surprise the world with a Light, as that in Tomorrow's Gazette we prepare them to Expect it."

30 June
1708.

"... All Affaires goes on well and hope next Saturday seven night to have the Light up and good habitation to live there. . . . Mr. Rudyerd writes to me, my Lord Dursley, Sir George Byng, and Sir John Jennings, hee dines with. They are to be with him this week, and well pleased, and when it's up it will be a great Sattisfaction to your Lordship's Obedient Son and Servant."

1 July
1708.

JOHN LOVETT."

Colonel Lovett is still busy arranging with the various ship-owning companies the method of paying and collecting the lighthouse dues; but he finds time to pack up a little parcel by the carrier—"And in it a pair of Buckles for my Dr. Little Bess's shoes, who I heare my Lady has made very fine, and all Silver."

6 July
1708.

"... My Deare Little Bessis's watch is new don, as well as it was Afirst; if she will Lett me have it to make a figure in Devonshire and Cornwall I will bring it to her on my return to London. . . . I send your Lordp. the Shape of the Lighthouse, and the way its built, as also the orders for the Collectors etc., and soe we shall order it for a year or two, till it's in a good method, and then I will alter them all and in my own name."

8 July
1708.

Colonel Lovett is starting to interview the shipping companies and the collectors at the chief ports, of whose intelligence and honesty he wishes to be personally assured. "... Then I will wish your daughter Joy of a very good Estate . . . the Collectors are the small tubes that will run into the great ones in this town."

13 July
1708.

Mary Lovett to Lord F., from Kilrudery

12 July
1708.

"... I please myself to think that my seeing my Dear Father and all my friends is to come; Mr. Lovett's stay in England has been longer then he purposed. . . . I content myself as well as I can, and hope in the end it will prove for the good of his family, for which I would suffer anything. My Sister's Company has been a very great comfort to me; we have severall friends from Dublin with us, which makes us keep over our time A little pleasantly, and I hope before we part with them my Deare will be come home, which will make Amends for all. . . . Verney is a most lovely Boy; I have wean'd Jack, and he thrives very well. I hope Betty is a good girl, I pray God bless her and make her so."

29 July
1708.

Colonel Lovett, from London, to Lord F., at Claydon

"... I thank God the Lanthorne is sett and all provision, Bedding, Candles etcetera, went off to the Person who was to live in it; bad weather forced them back, but by Mr. Rudyerd's letter yesterday after the storme, all things was very well, and only staid for 8 houres good weather to Lodge the men and everything they should want for six months. One Mr. Wilkesson goes to the Northward to Scotland and Liverpool with all things proper for the Collecrs., and the Commrs. of the Revenue, to put the Act in due force. . . . Corporations has promised me to do all that I ask of them. . . . I have been so bissey I have not waited on my friends, but they must pardon me, I came to do bisness, and not compliments. I long to finish my Circuit in order to goe home. I have been a Long time but it can't be avoyded without Loss, and it's the only time of my Life I will ever be parted from your Daur., who I will vallew and Love to the last Moment of my Life."

1 Aug.
1708.

Lord Fermanagh to Colonel Lovett

"I heartily rejoyce that you have brought your 'grate worke' so near to finishing, and I hope (with God's protection) it will redound to your proffitt as well as your Honour, in soe short a time goeing and thro' soe difficult a buisness. Noe body can wish you more success than myself, and all other friends here doe. . . . You are putting foot in stirrup; we all wish you a good journey in your Tour d'Angleterre."

The great day so arduously worked for has come at last. The light on the Eddystone Rock is shining out to sea.

3 Aug.
1708.

Lord Fermanagh to Mary Lovett

"... I would write to you oftener, but that writing is not so easy to me as it was formerly. . . . But I'me confident you believe the truth, that I love you dearely. I doubt not that the Light is now up at the Eddystone, and I wish you much Joy and proffitt by it. It's great work and soon finished. . . . I'me very glad your Boys are well and lovely, you'd think as well of your Girle if you saw her, or you'd differ from all, both friends and strangers, that know her."

24 Aug.
1708.

Daniel Baker, at Penn, to Ralph Verney, at Baddow Hall

"... I am glad Collonell Lovett's Edistoune Lighthouse is come to such a perfection, as that now he may begin to reap the fruits of his Labour and Charges; and may it fully answer his expectations

for he is so Honest a Gentleman that none of his friends but must wish him well, and pray Sir give all our services to him the next time you see him."

Colonel Lovett to Lord F. at Claydon

4 Aug.
1708.

"... It's with great Sattisfaction I send your Lordship the good news that the Light was put up this day 7 night (being the 28th. of last month), and will be in tomorrow's Gazett in due Forme. I have sent your Lordship a picture which I beg your acceptance of. One more I will give to the Prince as Ld. High Admerall, and one to the Corporation of Trinity House, and one goes for Ireland. In it is the 4 Men of Warr that Atended on the Worck—viz—the Roebuck, the Charles Gally, The Albrough, and Swallow. [The bottom of this sheet has been nibbled off by mice.] . . . The rest is shippes of all Nations that pay. . . ." [The words "to collect at the Custome Houses" and "Cowes and Portsmouth" remain with gaps. Overpage is a postscript about the picture]: "... When I sent to the Painter it was not don, so it will be next week before it will be your Lordship's."

Colonel Lovett writes again the next day, hoping the announcement in the *Gazette* will please the public, and will be "as great a Sattisfaction to them as to me". He is starting for Gravesend, Dover, Portsmouth, and Plymouth on horseback. At Dover he finds Sir George Byng, "who sails with 5000 Foote and 500 Dragoness for the coast of France". He is longing to return to the "best of Women", but hopes that she and hers "will be the happier for this Journey".

10 Aug.
1708.

Elizabeth Adams writes to Lord Fermanagh:

"... Today was senite Collonell Lovett began his progress. He was with me before he went. I shall miss him much, he has bin very obligin in his visits to me all this Summer."

17 Aug.
1708.

Lord F. to Colonel Lovett

19 Aug.
1708.

"I recd. your letter and the Picture, a singular favour which we all heare much admire. We are going to Church, this being the Thanksgiving Day, where we shall sing a Laudamus for the Lighthouse with hearty wishes for its prosperity to you and yours."

The Thanksgiving Service must have been that celebrated throughout the country for Marlborough's victory at Oudenarde, just five weeks before. Lord Fermanagh continues his thanks for the picture:

"And but that you are far better Employed, wee wisht you here to advise us, which place you like best to have it in. However, when you come this way, if you approve not our fancy, it shall be as you will direct. . . . Indede it is very fine and a mighty setting off of my house."

The writers of the letters, with their hopes and their sorrows, have long turned to dust, but the picture of the Eddystone Lighthouse, proudly flying the Red Ensign, with her consorts the *Roebuck*, the *Charles Galley*, the *Alborough*, and the *Swallow*, still endures, "a mighty setting off" of the wall at Claydon House, as perfect as on the day when Lord Fermanagh hung it up so joyfully.

Ars longa, Vita brevis.

20 Aug.
1708.

Colonel Lovett to Lord F., from Portsmouth

"... We are in dayly expectation of the Queen of Portugall, and an express came from Sir George Bing, that nothing can be don on the other Side, my Lord Dersley is ordered for Plymouth, and last night the Hampshire went out with an express for Sir George, which it's thought is to order him for this place to attend the Queen for Portugall. Tomorrow I goe for the Ile of White in Her Majesty's Yatch, being ordered to carry me there and from thence to Southamton. . . . My Blessing to Dear Little Bess."

In view of the difficult journeys and voyages, Mary was sometimes persuaded to leave her nursery party at Claydon, where Lady Fermanagh loved to grandmother all the family babies. During her husband's enforced absences, Mary is never so happy as when her sister Elizabeth is allowed to stay with her. "For since my lot has plased me so farr from my friends, it is A happiness beyond what I can express to have her here." Lord Fermanagh was anxious to be satisfied that Betty's long visits were agreeable to the Lovett family, his own opinion being that her proper place was at Claydon. Lord Fermanagh must have been fully reassured by this letter from Col. Lovett's mother at Dublin:

2 Aug.
1708.

"My Lord,—When Mistress Varnie came into this Kingdom, your Lordsp. was pleased to honour me with a letter setting a value in my continuing her in this place. Indeed my good Lord, her carryage has gain'd her the esteem and Love of all that knows her, and her company and convarsation has beene very oblidging and gratfoll to mee, and tho' our years are very unsutable, yet her wisdom and goodness is such, that she can make herself agreeable to all; and

if I have any Judgement, your Lordship is happy in her and my good Daughter, and they may be trosted with themselves, to goe throw the chances and changes of this Life, and it is a great greef to me to part with them both. May all happyness attend your Lordship and all your family, which is the harty prayers of, my good Lord, your Lordship's most faithfull and obedient servant,
FRANCES LOVETT."

Mr. Rudyerd has met Colonel Lovett at Exeter to report to him, and he and the whole Rudyerd family are leaving Plymouth for London. Colonel Lovett has paid all his accounts and discharged the men.

". . . I have been used with all the respect possible on my Journey; last Thursday I was on the Rock, and in the House of the Commr. of the Dock, and I went in his 10 Ores Boate, and had a Yatch and a Smack to attend upon us. He as well as I was plesed with everything, and those that Lives in it is very easy and happy, and the late Stormes did them no damage nor anyway made them uneasy. There went off severall boates, and in them women. The whole Country is very kind & civill to me, and gives mee a great many thanks for what is dun. . . . Tell my Deare Little Bess I will bring her something from the Bath."

25 Aug.
1708.

Colonel Lovett's fatigues were not over. He wished to see the agents of several shipping companies in the West, and to be assured of the honesty of the collectors who were to act for him. He is staying in October with "My Lord Pembroke and his new Lady."

". . . I was in great hopes to have finishet all my Bisnes before this, but the gentleman from Scotland had a great Troubell to settle with those obstinate people, but he now has the whole Kingdom to my Sattisfaction. . . . As to news, my Ld. Pembroke is made Ld. Admirall, Ld. Wharton Ld. Lt. of Irland, Ld. Somers Ld. President of the Council; my Br. Pearse is raising his Regiment . . . my service to dear Bess."

10 Nov.
1708.

Colonel Lovett has had an interview with "my Ld. Wharton, and satisfied him in a quarter of an hour". His return home has been so long delayed, but he hopes to meet Captain Rogers of the *Seaford* at Holyhead, who will go along with him. "An Est Indiaman, the Pembroke of Rotchester, is safe at Falmouth and has 80 tons of Coffee."

23 Nov.
1708.

24 Nov.
1708.

Mary Lovett, from Dublin, to Lord F., at Claydon

25 Dec.
1708.

"Christmas Day, 10 at night,—I can, I thank God, with great joy send you the welcome news of Mr. Lovett's being safe at home,

after a very bad journey by Land, and a dangerous passage by Sea. . . . I cannot express my joy to see him, and I believe he is very well pleased to be at home. I hope we shall part no more till Death. . . . Your letters were A great Cordiall to me, when I was in a very malloncolly way, but now I hope I shall rub off all that, and with great reason return God thanks for the mercy I have received."

12 Feb.
1709.

Colonel Lovett, from Dublin, to Lord F.

"I was so weary & tierd after a very sadd Jorny by Land and bad passage by Sea, that the night I landed I desir'd my wife to give your Lordship my duty. I thank God I found all my family very well and in good order. . . . We are very barren of news, only that we have had the hardest weather this winter that ever was known in this Kingdom. My Cousin Tighe was married, and are now at Kilrudery, which we have lent them. . . . Our blessing to dear little Bess, and we are very proud of her."

9 Oct.
1709.

Lady Fermanagh, at Claydon, to Lord F., in London

"My Deare,—Yours I received yesterday and think myself very much obliged to you in writing when I know that you have a great deal of business on your hands, or elce would have hardly left Claydon. We were all invited to Lady Denton's, and a fine entertainment we had; it was a Leaven dishes the first course, and a Doe killed on purpose upon this occasion. Mr. James and his wife was there, and Sir Ed. Longveil, the Councillor Denton, Cousin Woodward, Townsen and his wife and daughter, one Mrs. Sairs and her sister, they was Admarell Nevell's daughters, and Mrs. Tirell and ourselves, this was the company. . . . Sir E. Denton is not able to go out of his Chamber, soe I nevar saw him all day." [The roads are too bad for any carrier to go to London.] "The hay was all brought in an hour before we had any rain. Mr. Challoner sold wheat today at Aylesbury for ten shillings a bushel. . . . I hope if Mr. Lovett had any business with my Brother Luttrell that he met him in a good way, as we call it here, for sure if I can be able to pass a Judgment on anything I take him to be an honest specimen and one that has a great affection for his Lady. . . . We shall want a barrill of Soap, 12 Mopps, half a hundred of Good Spending sugar, 4 ounces of Mace, 6 of Cloves, a quarter of a pd. of Nutmegs; our reasons is gone all to four pd, and we have not a Current in the house, twelve pund of the best Starch; this I beg may come down by John Innes for we have not a bit of Starch in the House, and a pound more of blue, not powdered."

27 Mar.
1709.

Lord Meath's death in March was a great loss to them, and Lord Fermanagh tells Ralph that "Your Br. Lovett must now pay rent

(250 p. an. I think) for Kilrudery during the rest of the Lease which is 30 or 31 years to come."

Whenever he sent tidings of the progress of the Eddystone Lighthouse, Colonel Lovett asked that they should be sent on to his relatives, the Pigots of Doddershall, Sir John's neighbours at Claydon. It is an interesting coincidence that when the lighthouse at Alexandria was destroyed, during the fight with Arabi Pasha in 1882, it was a descendant, Lieutenant William Pigot of the *Monarch*, who, with the help of a bluejacket, climbed up the ruined lighthouse and lit the lamp again. Admiral Pigot in his old age was induced to tell the gallant story to his Claydon neighbours.¹

Although the light was burning on the Eddystone rock, there was still a good deal of building to be finished during the following summer, but Colonel Lovett hopes that at last

"... The whole is intirely fixt and completed. It has been very chargeable, but I almost know the end of it, and hope that the Incomb will fully Answer my trouble, Hazard and Expencc. I hope Mr. Rudyerd will be in London next month and we hope with my Sister to leave Dublin for Chester with the first convenience." 18 June 1709.

Colonel Lovett, from Chester, to Lord F.

8 Aug.
1709.

"... I thank God after being eighteen hours at sea, we came safe to Park-Gate, and last night to this place; we leave this afternoon for Nantwich. We call on Mrs. Rudyerd, who is near Litchfield, and hope to be at Sir Thomas Cave's on Thursday or Friday."

In October Mary Lovett is, with her children, at Claydon, and going up with her father by the coach to see relations. But her husband is still much plagued with the lighthouse business.

Colonel Lovett, from London, to Lord F.

24 Nov.
1709.

"I did intend to have paid my duty to your Lordp. at Claydon, but most of the Admeralls coming to town while my friend Sir John Lake was there, I chose rather to do the needfull with them and some of my Collrs.; and now the fleets are coming hom, to see that they pay a third full Tunnage . . . and prefer'd my family's welfare before my own pleasure. . . . I have a very handsome Certificate of Trinity House signed by Sir John Lake, Sir George Bing, Sir John Jennings, Sir Thomas Hardy, and all the Captns. and Commandrs. in town which I hope will be of great Servis to me and little Verney."

¹ *Bucks Biographies* (Oxford, 1912, pp. 234-5).

That winter, 1709-10, was a delightful one at Claydon; Lord Fermagh's Christmas party included the Lovetts and "the little fry", as he called them; and on Sunday, January 18, 1710, Mary had a happy addition to the family in the birth of a baby, christened Mary in Middle Claydon Church: "Gossips, Brigadier Ed. Pearce, Barbara Baker, and Cornelia Dunck, Ld. F. standing for the Brigadier"; thus making up the Lovett family of two boys and two girls, born alternately at Dublin and at Claydon.

Lady Cave writes from Stanford

22 Jan.
1710.

"to congratulate Sister Lovett and my brother of their daughter. . . . We had hoped to drinck a cup of cordial with you and our other friends before my Sister left her Chamber, which now seems, without some alteration in the ways or weather, too hazardous an undertaking on horseback, as we intended."

Little Mary did not long survive.

Colonel Lovett and his wife are lodging for a short time in London with Brother Pearce; the business is not yet concluded. Colonel Lovett writes:

21 Mar.
1710.

"My Bill was read a 2nd. time & went through the Comtee., so now it Lyes only for the last reading which I hope for tomorrow & then it only waits the Queen's Act." This is again deferred, owing to "the Lords' disagreement to the Amendment. . . . I hope it will be a satisfaction to your Lordshp. haveing the house of Commons on my side & most of the house of Lords. I have disoblged a great many of my Country, but it makes no disturbance in my mind."

28 Mar.
1710.

Mary Lovett to Lady F.

"... I think we stand much as when I writ last, and if Mr. Lovett's business will permit, we desine next week to try Epsom Air, which I pray God may doe him Good. His Act of Parlt. is not yet determined but we fear the enemy is too powerful, but this week will put us out of all doubt & then he will write to my Father."

1 Apr.
1710.

Col. Lovett to Lord F.

"... After many days waiting on proper persons & doeing the needful in all places . . . I have carried my poynt against the great Lord W. [Wharton], for after an hour's debate in the House, & many Speeches, & some very hard ones, on a devission I carried it by 2, viz. 17 against 15, so that now I am safe. We shall only stay in town for the Royal Assent, & then for Epsom and a little quiet &

Country Aire which with this good success I hope will make me quite well."

Mary Lovett to Lord F.

6 Apr.
1710.

"... Yesterday the Queen went to the house of Lords, where with severall more she passed Mr. Lovett's Bill, which Agreeable sight I and my Neeces went to see. I hope now Mr. Lovett will begin to take some care of himself and get out of town A Satterday, for he indeed very much wants it; but I shall stay in town till next Thursday, being desired by my Aunt Dunck to be at the Grand Entertainment and represent her, which I promised to doe."

Col. Lovett to Lord F.

8 Apr.
1710.

"My Lord,—I hope the Enclosed will be a satisfaction to your Lordp. as its to me. I have got it printed that this night it may goe to Dublin & the proper places, & now God Willing I will goe to Epsom for a few days to be Easy and have a little quiet, butt my wife is next week to be a great Lady at my Ld. Mayor's. . . . I have so many Letters to write—I will trouble your Lordship with no more than that I am & will ever be, my Ld., Your Lordship's dutyfull & obedient Son & Servant,
JOHN LOVETT."

This was the last of the many letters written to his father-in-law; not till the work seemed to be finished did the worker allow himself to feel tired.

In an undated letter of Lady Fermanagh's, from Stanford, there had been an allusion to an accident, but "the bonesetter gives Mrs. Lovett great hopes of Mr. Lovett's arm doing well".

There had been previous hints of his extreme fatigue after his winter voyage to Dublin in 1708, and once he had been delayed by an attack of "the yellow janders", but his friends were not alarmed till his strength suddenly began to fail.

Brigadier Ed. Pearce, at Epsom, to Lord F.

22 Apr.
1710.

"My Lord,—I find the Aire of this place not so beneficiall to my Brother Lovett as we hop'd for, by the advice of Mr. Rudyard, Mr. Jess (who are now with us) & my own, we carry him to London tomorrow. Your Lordship has a greater influence over him than wee, & (if it suit your convenience), the sooner you could be in towne the better.—Your Lordsp's most obedient humble servant,
ED. PEARCE."

Mary adds at the back of the same sheet:

22 Apr.
1710.

"I am in soe much trouble I know not what I write, onely I joyn with my Brother Pearce & Mr. Rudyard in beging to see you as soon as possible, for I find a great Change in my Dear and never to be forgotten Mr. Lovett. I fear his affaires are not soe well settled as they might be, soe wish I had your advise what to doe, for I fear I am your Unfortunate, though Obedient Daughter till death,

M. LOVETT.

P.S. If I have the honour of seeing you, pray doe not mention my sending."

Mary speaks of her husband as if he were almost beyond the reach of her love; possibly the lighthouse was still troubling his dreams, if he was scarcely conscious—otherwise she would hardly speak of "his affaires" at such a moment. The curtain falls before the last scene ends. In Lord Fermanagh's pocket-book, the 24th of April 1710 was the date of Colonel Lovett's death, two days after these letters were written.

Colonel Lovett was buried in the family vault at Soulbury Church; the rector, Mr. Sandby, may have remembered the happy couple who rode over to Liscombe not quite seven years before.

The shock to the old Mrs. Lovett in Ireland must have been great, "the fondest Mother", as her daughter-in-law described her, "that ever I saw".

12 June
1710.

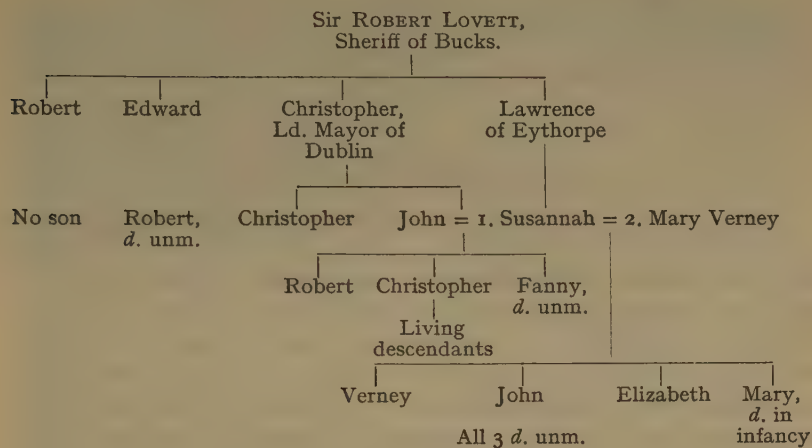
Lord F. to Mrs. Frances Lovett

"Madam,—With grief do I sett pen to paper on the sadd occasion of our great loss by the Death of Deare Mr. Lovett, on which I condole you and bare a due share of sorrow with you; he being a most dutyfull son, the Kindest of Husbands, a Loveing Father, & a true friend; all which perfections rarely Center in one man, as they did in him, for which he is now among the Blessed, Though wee depriv'd of the happiness of his Converse. Madam, May you enjoy a long and prosperous Life, and may all your Children and Children's Children be a comfort to you, are the hearty prayers of, Madam, Your Affite. Bror. & very humble Servt.,

FERMANAGH."

Nought may endure but mutability.

LOVETTS OF DUBLIN AND LISCOMBE



CHAPTER XIII

SIR THOMAS CAVE, THE COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

SIR THOMAS CAVE, 3rd Baronet of Stanford and Member of Parliament, is an outstanding figure in the Verney Letters. He loved exercise of all kinds, and very specially hunting and horse-racing. He disapproved of the excessive drinking and card-playing of his brother-squires, but he provided a generous table and ample supplies of ale and wine in his entertainments at Stanford. His early and happy marriage made his home the best loved place on earth. In a characteristic letter, he said that "Women in the plural had little attraction for him, because woman in the singular was so dear to him". His own and his wife's nephews and nieces were always welcome at Stanford, and he is never too busy to report the cutting of a baby's tooth or the progress of the Rugby scholars. The birthday of his eldest boy, Verney Cave, was marked by such extensive hospitality that it became almost a county festival. Any member of his wife's family was welcomed for weeks together at his house, and this specially applied to Mary Lovett and her children, after her husband's death.

The story of his life is best given by his frequent letters to Claydon—his handwriting and spelling are those of an educated gentleman, and his wife was happily much more accomplished than most of the ladies of her day, and was able to share in all his interests and to do the honours of his house very gaily and graciously.

Outside his home, his horses, and his dogs, his chief interest was in politics. An election campaign afforded him the keenest sport, and he resented passionately any unfair party dealings. But the election once won, his attendance in the House of Commons was generally very irksome to him. He took for a time a house in Leicester Fields, and his beautiful wife attended the Court festivities when her numerous babies permitted of her presence; but



Sir Thomas Cave, 3rd Baronet.

he seems generally to have gone up and down to Westminster from Northamptonshire. He was never tired of inveighing against the fatigues of fashionable society and the constraint of London life.

What was said later of Walpole was true, in its degree, of Sir Thomas Cave:

"After the fashion of his race his love of sport prevailed over every passion. A letter from his huntsman or his gamekeeper would always have precedence over any political dispatch, however important."¹

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

16 Dec.
1703.

"Sir,—I am glad to hear you had so good sport when with Mr. Glynn, and that the Horses perform'd so well. I would not have Jack to ride Trusty too much; for I can't tell whether I shall not be with you on Sunday night or soon after, for had I not left such Dear Company, the very recitall of your sport would make me wish myself with You."

He writes to Ralph, at Claydon, from London:

"The weather continuing so seasonable, I hope you have had good Sport a hunting. It being a harty wish from mee since your Delight is chiefly in that particular Diversion, and if you please to bidd Jack take my Bay Horse out with you once per week if well enough, to keep him in breath against my coming down, itt will very much oblige your affectionate brother."

29 Jan.
1704.

Sir Thomas's seal, when not using his coat of arms, was a greyhound in full course, with the word "Garde".

His horses and hounds are constantly at Claydon, and Ralph suggests that they should stay on there when he returns to Stanford, but Sir Thomas replies:

"I am sorry I cannot gratify you in that, it being my Chiefest Diversion—and the Hounds of a Breed I know so well, that I cannot do it; therefore I thought it fitt to give notice of my Design before I came Down rather than by prolonging itt to Disappoint you. However, Sir, if I can secure at any time, anything else in any other pack or by helping you in the Breed, I will endeavour to show myselfe your obliging friend and affectionate Brother."

4 Apr.
1704.

London was thoroughly uncongenial to him, even when he had the interest of being a Member of the House of Commons. "This place emptyes dayly, in which Happy Number I earnestly wish

15 Apr.
1704.

¹ *Footprints of Statesmen*, by R. B. Brett.

17 May
1704.

myselfe." "I feare that Stinking London will increase any Dis-temper when the wandering mind is soe sett upon the country."

1 Feb.
1704.

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

"As I was this Day in Fleet Street, I called on Mr. Etherington for your watch, which I have sent by the Carrier in a box; the Watch cost a Crown, mending, being just Sixpence more than the Value of the Watch in Mr. Etherington's opinion." [The watch-maker figures again in a later letter.]

14 May
1704.

"After my Long and Tedious absence from you—be pleased to give me leave to acquaint you that (to my great satisfaction) I shall, God willing, be with you at Claydon on Monday, or Tuesday at farthest; in the Interim Adieu, from your affectionate Brother.

P.S. Kindest Remembrances to all our Neighbours, especially poor Mr. Butterfield and his Family."

Lord and Lady Fermanagh were detained in London, by his ill health, but Ralph Verney was delighted to have their company.

14 May
1704.

Sir Thomas Cave, at Claydon, to Lord Fermanagh, at the Queen's Head, in James Street, Covent Garden

"My Lord,—We have at length reached Claydon; this place seems very pleasant, but in my Opinion it wants its Right Owner to add and preserve its Usual Lustre and Delight."

Lady Cave adds:

14 May
1704.

"We had a very dusty Journey to Claydon, where we were met with the ill news of your being out of order, which I am extreemly concerned at. I shall be glad to hear my Deare Mother and you were soe well as to come into the Country, & then I should be in hopes of seeing you quickly at Stanford, which I should esteem as the greatest Comfort and Blessing that can be."

16 May
1704.

Lord Fermanagh replies, wishing very much to join them at Claydon, for "the Town is not only empty but excessive dusty and hott, so that I am quite weary of the place".

The story of the marriage of Thomas Cave and Margaret Verney, in February 1703, has been told in a previous chapter. His father, Sir Roger, died in the following October, and he had afterwards paid a business visit to the home which to him was a sad one, and had settled the affairs of his stepmother and his sisters, who were to make their future residence at Eydon; but it was not till the following spring that Sir Thomas and the Honble. Lady Cave took up

their formal residence at Stanford, and received a warm welcome from their neighbours.

Sir Roger, though he had alienated the affection of the best of sons, and earned for himself the title of a "curmudgeon", was undoubtedly a man of consummate taste. He completed in 1690 a compact and handsome stone house, with its perron and outside steps all in good proportion, foursquare to every wind that blew, and set in a park of quite exceptional beauty, well timbered and with the river Avon running through it. The gentle fallow deer wandering in and out of the shadows of the trees, and the swans on the water, still add, as of old, a touch of vivacity to the landscape; and it was in the full beauty of May that Margaret saw Stanford Park for the first time.

Inside the house, the old needle-work, the pictures, and the priceless collection of books have been added to by succeeding owners, together with a unique collection of Stuart relics formerly belonging to Cardinal York. But it is essentially unchanged. The characteristic wooden staircase is the same as when Margaret tripped up it, in all the joy of a young mistress first viewing her husband's home.

He must have been deeply gratified by their reception, and it had to be shared at once with the family at Claydon. Sir Thomas writes to Lord Fermanagh:

"I was very sorry we had not your Company to Stanford, where We were received with extreme Civility from all our Neighbouring Countryes, meeting I believe with between 500 or 600 Men, and wonderful Treats of Sweetmeats and Cool Tankards by the Way. I find my Deere very forward and hope to find some of them Rogues and Rascalls." 29 May 1704.

Lady Cave adds, to her father:

"The Country has been extreamly civil and shows abundance of Rejoyceing and respect at our comeing, severall times comeing to meet us and the bells ringing at every town we came thro'. . . . You have no reason to fear wanting room and a hearty welcome, come when you will. I am extreamly concerned to hear you are displeased we did not leave you our pictures when last in Town, but your disliking Mr. Murry's Drawing of mine which was done, I was desirous you would name another for me to set to. . . . I beg you will be pleased to let us have yours and my Mother's Pictures to Grace our House." 29 May 1704.

Lord Fermanagh replies :

3 June
1704.

"Deare Daughter,—I recd. your Letter from Stanford where I wish you health and a long life; as to pleasure, noe place can afford you more, therefore, it's needless to say anything of that. I am sorry you are concerned and troubl'd about so triviall a thing as Pictures. . . . I believe your Good Man has promist your Mother both his and your Picture, and that she promiseth hers; she thought you had sat again because she desired an Original and not a copy."

13 June
1704.

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"Honoured Sir,—I am willing to embrace every opportunity of sending my Duty and Respects to you and my Mother; but at this time can only write to you by reason the Collar-Maker from Steeple Claydon [probably of horse-collars], by whom I send this, is but this moment come into the house and is going again immediately. . . . I have this day bin a-hunting, and we had the good success to Kill a Deer, and a Hare, which I think extrordinary sport for one day."

12 June
1704.

Mr. Cheret confirms the report that "The towne goes very empty but florisheth with Lord Woodstock's wedding favours".

15 Aug.
1704.

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"Honoured Sir,—Having the opportunity of sending (at the return of Mr. Oughton's Horse) I gladly embrace it to return my humble duty and thanks to you for all favours and kindness to us all during our stay at Claydon, at the leaving of which place we had a very tiresome journey, it being excessive hot."

Her father replies:

17 Aug.
1704.

"Deare Daughter,—I'me glad to hear you are all well after your hot journey, for I am sincible that a Glass Chariot is an inconvenient way of travelling in the Month of August, but tis Beauish, and that makes Amends to your sex Especially when overgrown with pride. . . . Sir Richard Fisher (of 83) is married to the Lady Dalton of 50 years of age; Lady Plymouth to her Chaplain, to the no small grief of her Ancient father the Duke of Leeds. Lady Fox is neere her time, hath bought all things necessary but nothing fine, and Carryes herself soe prudently without pride that she hath the praise of most that knowe her. I wish all my acquaintance may follow that good example. I am, your Loving Father,

FERMANAGH."

Narcissus Luttrell, in his Diary, at the date August 15, 1706, records: "Some days since, the Countess Dowager of Plymouth

(daughter of the Duke of Leeds) married Dr. Bisse her Chaplain." This would put the marriage two years later, but Lord Fermanagh's letter is dated 17th August 1704, in his very clear handwriting.

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

6 Sept.
1704.

"... I believe the hearing of hunting can't much delight you, and I had much rather, Sir, have enjoyed your good Company than to repeat the great Sport we had on Thursday last. In coming from Hare hunting and but little sport, just by the Parke we spy'd a Sorell out of his Bounds, and the Esqre. and I resolved to kill it, in short we uncoupled our Beagles and laid Em on him. He held hard running, I believe near an Hour and a Half, the Dogs ran like stanch Hounds, and never changed, tho' severall Hares started up before Em, which I wondered at; the Deer took the pales after so hard running, so we killed him afterwards. Yesterday we had also another very good day's Sport, hunting Hare—but I can't tantalize any more. . . ."

A guest who signs himself "Gustavus" gives his account of the same hunting, and speaks of shooting partridges and of two nights' dancing.

Lady Cave to Ralph Verney, at Claydon

20 Sept.
1704.

"... We have been at Leicester Race, there being variety of Devirsions as you shall hear as followeth—It being the Thanksgiving Day we went thither to Church in the morning, to the Race after Dinner, after the Race to see a Play, and from the Play to a Gentleman's House in the Town, where wee danced some part of the night and home the next day. Mrs. Cole and Mrs. Shuttleworth and some more is to dine here, and if you and my Uncle had been here we would have had a Dancing Bout in the Hall, but without you we can't pick up a good Company, soe you have spoilt our Ball by being absent, which is no small disappointment to all the Company as well as to your Affectionate Sister."

The Caves hear that Uncle Palmer is ill with an intermitting fever. Lady Cave "is speedily designed for London". Sir Thomas writes that he has had much company to dine with him which he met in the morning a-hunting, as my Lord Denbigh, Mr. Shuttleworth, and many others.

21 Sept.
1704.

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

29 Sept.
1704.

"Dear Sir,—As we both Love your Royall Sport called Hunting, I can't but communicate to you my great loss. When the morning

for hunting approached, severall of the Dogs necks were swelled so that they could not endure the Couples, and that occasioned my Stay at home; but the next news was far worse, for the day after Virgin died, and since that Musick and Snowball and Gamester, and this afternoon Venus died also, leaving three couple and a half of extraordinary fine whelps, in short I can't tell if I shall have one hound left in a week. The Reason of this we can't tell but suppose to be occasioned by eating a horse that died of an infectious humour. That from the like misfortune may you be free is the sincere wish of your affectionate Brother."

15 Oct.
1704.

"Sir,—For your obliging letter and kind offer I return you thanks, and hope it will not be long before I shall enjoy your good company at Stanford; If you please to bring two or three Couples of the Best with you it will be enough. I have not lost all that I shall by that Envious Distemper called the Murren, which came by their eating a Dead Horse that died of it. A piece of the same flesh we mistrusted, I ordered to be buried, and as one of my Labourers was helping Leonard to push it into the Ground, Leonard's Fork slipt out and hitt the other in the face, and though it made no Entrance or pierct, it swelled and with the venom of itt he died in three or four days. [Then follows a detailed account of Lutterworth Race.] My sister gives her service to you as does Adolphus Oldcastle."

15 Oct.
1704.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... I hope the pleasant company at the Bath and the drinking of those waters has much eased you of the giddiness in your head, and Deafness etc.; and to show greater effect than our Rosemary Possett drinke has on my wife, who has such a cold too that it makes her uneasy in the daytime, and in the night the little Bratt kicks, my wife coughs, and I leave you to guess how I am put to itt to quiett both—and my Lord amidst other sufferings comes the loss of many of my hounds. . . . Adolphus presents you with his service as so does my sister Cave."

22 Oct.
1704.

Sir Thomas writes again expressing his wife's great wish to have her sister Elizabeth on a visit, but Lord Fermanagh considers that, the winter coming on apace, she would have an ill journey on her return home again, and it would be more convenient that she should stay at Claydon, "which I believe she is very sorry for. Our Women were at the old Sport, cards, at Mr. Abell's."

28 Oct.
1704.

Lord Fermanagh to Lady Cave

"... I hear Colonel Wharton died on Wednesday. Who will be our Knight of the Shire in his room I doe not knowe. The Parliamt.

are adjourned till Tuesday, they have addresst to the Queen and have ordered all their Members to attend in a week's time. The Yatchs are gon to fatch home the D. of Marlborough; Landou holds out, some believes the French have left Gibraltar, I have not told you all the news I heare, and very likely its more than is true, but as it came to me so it goes to you. Cousin Humph. Lloyd has heard from the Captain, since the Great Battle [Blenheim] where he was & came off well." [He is expected home in November.]

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

10 Dec.
1704.

"... I am very sorry to part with my Brother Verney so soon; than Whom none is more Welcome or Dearer to me; hoping that this speddy and safe return will plead for a longer stay and more perfect enjoyment of his Good Company at another Seasonable Opportunity."

On January 4, 1705, Sir Thomas Cave's eldest son was born in Leicester Fields, and christened Verney.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

16 Jan.
1705.

"My Lord,—As to what you write concerning the Church Register; it shall in particulars be perform'd. . . . Mr. Palmer and his Lady were here yesterday mornng. to see my Wife and Little One; who I thank God continues very well, excepting my wife's cold. We intend to try something for itt after she's gathered some strength. I have desired Mr. Palmer to supply Your Lordsp's. place at the Christening of Him, who I hope will prove as great a Comfort as a present Joy to your Lordsp's. dutiful Son and Servant,

THOMAS CAVE.

P.S. Both our Duties to you and your Lady, to whom thanks for her Quilt."

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

23 Jan.
1705.

"... Isterday being A fin clear day here, I went to see Lady Cave and your Godsun, who is a very Fin thriving Child. I wish you much Joy of him and that you may live to see him an horsman. I dineid ther and we drunk your health and wisht our Claydon friends ther. . . . I supos you hear that Sir John Nicklas is dead and most people thinks my Cousan Nicklas decais A pas. . . . I heare all most every day newes of sum of the Great Bankers or Merchants in the Citty goeing Aside; A monxt the rest is Sir Basill Fier Bras named for one, and it is feared many more will folow. It is thought Sum is gon out of Knavery as well as poverty; for I never hard of more finery then is nowadayes, and yet great complaints

for wont of money is by most, as well as by her that is your very poore but allwayes your most affectionate Aunt and Humble Servant."

Sir Basil Firebrace was a merchant of the City, and sheriff in 1687. King William had lately made him a baronet. His daughter Hester married Basil Fielding, fourth Earl of Denbigh. The old spelling of his name was the Norman, Fier à Bras.

23 Jan.
1705.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... My wife who would have writt to you had not my persuasions prevailed with her to defer it, lest it might disorder her head and injure her eyes, I desire I may bear the blame. I thank God her cold is somewhat diminished, she eats more and that with better Stomach since she had drank the asses milk, and our little one continues very well.

There are severall strange reports abt. Towne concerning the Golsmiths; and 6 or 7 are march't off; amongst whom is one Johnson in Lombard Street. Mr. Cheret is with us, his Daughter Piggott is brought to bed of a boy this morning."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

28 Jan.
1705.

"Pray tell your wife I would not have her write to me till she skatters the Mice, for soe I heare from you or her sister Verney how she is it's all I desire. . . . Blessings to attend your new-made Christian."

A letter from Lady Cave to her father crosses his:

27 Jan.
1705.

"... Being the first time of my taking Pen and Paper in hand since I first fell ill. . . . I can never thank you too often for answering for my little boy and letting him have the name of Verney which I value above all names."

30 Jan.
1705.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—There is no materiall news here, the two Houses have passed a Bill to render Ineffectuall, and incapable of Sitting in the House of Commons, all Officers of New Erected Offices since 1687, and have rejected another, which I was in hopes might have pass't, to render all incapable of being in the Lords' House, who receive any publick Benefit by Taxes, Places etc. I believe, my Lord, Mr. Oughton is quite turn'd for the other Side, or is what most call, A Trimmer. By this I suppose You sufficiently tired with your Dutifull Son and Servant,

THOMAS CAVE."

*Lord Fermanagh to Sir Thomas Cave*4 Feb.
1705.

"... I wish the Bill to Incapacitate sitting in the House those who received benefit by Publick Taxes had past, and am glad that concerning new Elected Offices since 1687 has gone through the House; for, now the Chu. of Engd. is checkt, every little Sugar-plum is pleasing to her Children. I wish a Bill was brought in to make Officers as well as Members of Parlt. as others to be with their men, and not be suffered to Loyter in Engd. when the Campaign is begun. If I were in Towne I should mention it in discourse to some Parliament men, for I remember in last Summer's relations twas said there was a great want of Officers in our Army in Germany, and the like hath since been said in Gibraltar."

*Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh*6 Feb.
1705.

"My Lord,—I think what you mention abt. Officers as well in Parliamt. as others to be very equall and just; but tis true too late at prest. to talk of Itt by Reason they will receive no New Bill; but against the new one meets, I'll doe my Endeavour to effect the bringing-on a Bill of that nature, by some friend. Yesterday my Lord the Prisoners of Aylesbury were brought to Barr; but Baile was refused Em there; and Tis reported the Lords designe an appeal, so to bring Em before them and to Discharge Em; but I can't tell how They'll Manage itt. I heare Mr. Winton is employed in the Prisoners' case; which makes me believe, Justice will be Scarce by reason of the Youth employed to administer; tis thought the Parliamt. will rise in a week. I suppose you've heard of the Death of Lord Lucas and Mr. Rowley the Groom Porter; so there is two Good Places vacant, and may be more, it being a very sickly time everywhere."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

"This week Carrier hath lost my letters with a bundle of a fortnight's printed newes which you may be confident is a great disappointment to us ignorant country folks, who hear but little of what passeth at the Great Towne where you are, however I had the comfort of yours which came in the box safe. The Candidates for Brackley are Mr. Cha. Egerton, Colonel Sidney, and Mr. James; the first and last are the present Members. The Colonel came to the Towne in his Coach and Six, and hath treated the Men two or three times, and the Weomen once. It's a very sickly time in these parts, my Butler and Holliday are both sick in their beds.

"... I hear the Lord Chamberlain hath made Mr. Archer of Warwickshire Groom Porter, Dr. Breach of Oxford hath this week

11 Feb.
1705.11 Feb.
1705.

been a Circuit amongst his Patients, and visited at Mr. Prices, Mr. Hains, Parson Dancers, Mr. Phillips the Attorney, and Mr. Pigots, at all which places I believe he hath well lined his Pocketts, and by it you may Judge how sickly this country is."

13 Feb.
1705.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—The looseing of the Newspapers must be a great disappointment to you who are so farr from towne; as I could wish myself equally distant from this place, for I thinke Election discourses will admitt the Hearing of no other, except the frequent Indispositions of Everybodye's health here. Yesterday being the last Day of Terme, Westminster Hall and other Courts were much crowded, particularly to hear how the Aylesbury Prisoners came off; whom they thought were to be brought forth as yesterday. I was there myselfe but too early to heare their proceedings, other urgent occasions calling me, was forc't away. Now Sir, the most Dismall nues I heard a great while is this day's Papers from Claydon, which makes us Fear you Design to robb us of my Sister Verney; whose Company will be much wanted for I Design to go to Stanford on business, intending to return soon, till which my Deare will be very Lonely without my sister. . . . I confess, My Lord, as the want of her Company will be Great, the Grant of it must consequently be the more obliging and kind."

This request was granted.

18 Feb.
1705.

Lord Fermanagh to Sir Thomas Cave

"You have made up my Loss of the Newspapers by sending me the Lords' Address, which I liked very well, and wish they had the money which the Comm. Genll. of the Accounts receive for doing no good, that ever I heard of."

25 Feb.
1705.

Lord Fermanagh to Sir Thomas Cave

"I seldom have any letters from London but it brings news of some of my acquaintance Dead or Sick. . . . The Greenvills supped here this week, where their man was soe Ill of an Ague that he lay here that night, & we sent our Postilion home with them. But no more of these sickly storyes."

27 Feb.
1705.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—Many thanks are due for your kind Invitation, tho' I can't accept of itt, having engag'd to go Down with Sir Justinian Isham, one of our present Members for North'ton Shire; Who was

so kind to offer Me a place in his Coach on Fryday morning next; at which Time We and others of our Countrymen Designe to Sett out; I believe my Stay will be short in the Country, as I hope 'twill be in Town, after my Return. Wishing us all well home Again, for this place will seem very Unpleasant after the Company is gone away, which must be soon after the Riseing of the Parliamt., as tis thought Thursday or Fryday will be the Time. There has been presented to her Majty. an Address, Desiring her to prevent the bringing in a Writt of Error into the Hs. of Lords, abt. the Aylesbury Prisoners, and to finde out the Authors of that Contrivance. I will not promise to Returne without calling to Thanke your Lordshippe for your favour to your Lordshippe's Dutifull Sone,

THOMAS CAVE.

All Duty and Service to every-body. Tis reported Just now that Nelly Denton & the Rest of Medes' of Ailesbury Councill, are sent to the Tower."

The case of *Ashby v. White*, known as "the Aylesbury Men", caused a dispute between the Lords and Commons on questions of their respective jurisdictions.¹

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

27 Feb.
1705.

"... The chief Publick news being about the Aylesbury business, as for Private news the most that I can hear comes from my Lady Draper's, who has frequent Balls and Entertainments at her House; this day there is a weding kept there; the Bridegroom is Mr. Salter the Grocer, and the Bride a friend of my Lady's. Mr. Oughton is a great Dancer amongst them, and invited to all their Balls."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

"I presume Sir Thomas is at Stanford, solacing himself after the fatigues of a London Journey, whither I believe he would not return in hast, but that he left behind him two soe Deare to him, yurselpe and the Babe. Bee ye all happy in Each Other's Company. I am gladd to hear the Lady Draper is soe usefull and Airey, to have Balls and a Nuptiall at her House." Details follow about the sick neighbours, and "Dr. Breach and a Chirurgeon who are attending them".

4 Mar.
1705.

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

6 Mar.
1705.

"... Mr. Oughton is gone this day to North'ton, to make his appearance I suppose at the Assizes," where he would meet Sir Thomas as a County Magistrate.

¹ See Turberville's *History of the House of Lords*, published 1927, under "Aylesbury Election Case".

20 Mar.
1705.

"... My cousen Viccars was taken soe ill of a feavour that she was bloudded at 12 at night, and I hear Sir Richard Hoare's Son's Wife is dead in her Lyeing-inn, by her nurse's raping [wrapping] a quilt about her that was not aired, at her first geting up, which killed her in half an hour, soe I think all the news everywhere is of people's illness or deaths."

26 Apr.
1705.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—Having some little Affairs in the City, I took the opportunity of delivering your money and letters to Sir Richard Hoare, who I perceive is design'd one of the Candidates for the ensuing Parliamt., to whom I wish good Luck. It is very warmly reported here that the Lord Kr. will be turn'd out, and succeeded by Sir J. Trevor, present Master of the Rolls, for the leaving of which last office he is to be paid £1500. I hear Lord Lempster's Brother is dead, I wish his Decease does not hurt our Election, he being very stirring for the Old Ones."

15 May
1705.

Lord Fermanagh to Sir Thomas Cave

"I sent Perry into Essex Street with my Service to Mrs. Cave, but she was not then returned to London. I'me glad Sir Geo. Beaumont is chosen at Leicester. I doubt Sir Charles Shuckburgh will be hard put to it for Warwickshire, but I heare Sir Wm. Boughton left London this week purposely to be serviceable to Sir Charles. In Covent Garden, Dean Freeman and Mr. Churchwarden Cheret lead a party of Infantry, about 100, to vote for Boyle and Colt against Cross, which last gave over poleing, soe other two were chosen for Westminster. In Hertfordshire there was a great Poll, and Sir — Spencer, with Mr. Freeman, carried it, and Major Halsey and Bucknell lost it. I believe Esquire Oughton hath given you a large account of that Election, for he was there.

Amersham, Wendover, and Aylesbury Elections will be disputed before the House."

No date.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... I can now send you the News of our gaining the Election for our County of Northtn. The votes were thus: Sir Justn. Isham 2483; Mr. Cartwright 2478; Lord Mordt. 2303; & Sir John 2174. This was much contrary to that party's affectations, and indeed they made itt to Us a much Greater fatigue than need to've been.

The Election for the Borough of Leicester went thus: Sir G. Beaut. 680; Winstanley 594; Mr. Carter 585."

*Lord Fermanagh to Sir Thomas Cave*27 May
1705.

"... I was glad to hear you were Victorious at the Election for your County. We were not so fortunate here, our Country being mostly of the A.1 stamp. Mr. Dormer had 2630 Votes; Sir R. Temple 2433; and Lord Cheyne 2137. The small-pox is in this town ... and that frightful distemper is increasing among us."

*Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh*30 June
1705.

"... I am sorry for poor Mr. Coleman that Lyes in such a Languishing condition, whose Death perhaps may be a Dis-advantage to your Lordsspp. We have no news here, but thanks to you for Acquainting Me of my Wife's Ramble, otherwise I should not have known where she was; and pray my Lord after my Duty to you and my Lady, with Love and Service to every body, be pleased to Chide my Good Woman for Galloping Abroad without acquainting her bedd-fellow."

"... By Innes the Carrier your Lordshipp may expect mine and my wife's picture, humbly praying that you may think Em worth house-room, and that you'd be pleased at your conveniency to favour me with your picture and my Lady's, as a very desirable present."

3 July
1705.

"... The removal of my L. Kr. has been discoursed of a long time; the reason of his removal proceeds from his Resolute answer to Ld. Wharton and other Wiggish Peers, about your Country Justices of the Peace, and certainly it is, that He will not doe as they would have him; which is the only offence I hear of. There are several alterations of late, and we must not wonder at it, Every Court having its Favourites."

10 July
1705.*Lord Fermanagh, from London, to Lady Cave*20 July
1705.

"... I have been here so little a time that I have not pickt up any news, I'll not detain you longer from the enjoyment of your husband's Pleasing Company, with whom I wish you a long continuance of happiness."

Lady Cave had heard that Cousin Boate (*née* Denton) was come over, and that she designed to go no nearer to London than Oxford, not expecting any favour or kindness from her brother.

29 July
1705.*Lady Cave to Ralph Verney*13 Aug.
1705.

"Deare Brother,—I am extreamly glad to hear you are Better. ... Last Friday there being a Fair at Rugby, Lady Boughton and Us,

with some more Company, mett at a Gentleman's House there, where we had Coventry Musick and Danced all Night, but we were a little put to it for men, having but one in our Company a Dancer . . . the rest all Sticking close to the Punchbowle. I have one piece of newes more to tell you, and that is, that Verney cut a tooth above a week ago, and with great ease."

15 Aug.
1705.

Sir Thomas Cave, at Stanford, "To the Honourable Ralph Verney, at Mr. Oughton's, at the Three Blew Spikes in St. Martin's Street, near Leicester Fields"

"I am sorry you was disappointed of your visit in Essex Street, expecially by my Sister's having the Small pox, of which I am also glad to hear she is like to do well as that you are in the mending condition. I have continu'd in a pretty good State of health since I left London; which I endeavour to preserve by going to hunt, as today, but had Indifferent pastime, the Wind being High and Neither Doggs nor Horses in running order, but I hope twill not be long before they Are. . . . We hear of the expectation of Mrs. Lovett who will certainly be at Claydon very quickly, we hearing of a letter as tis thought from Her, directed to Lady Fermanagh and from Chester.

Sir, since your desire is still to continue in town, I don't doubt but Squire Oughton will muster upp all his arguments to persuade you to Wiggison, as well as other Sweet opposite Divertions in that Street; be so kind as to acquaint him that I did not forgett him . . . with constant wishes for your further amendment, as at all times sincerely desired by your loving Brother and aff. Humble Servt.,

THOMAS CAVE."

23 Oct.
1705.

Ralph Palmer to Lord Fermanagh

" . . . The Queen sent to the Lord mayor to make Bonfires, and Tower Guns went off as well as the Park Guns, for being in possession of Barcelona."

15 Nov.
1705.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

" . . . We have no newes from abroad, and home news is most upon Election; of which sort the D. of Marlborough and Mr. Gape had a Cause that came on yesterday and held till Three of the Clock in the Morning, and came on agen today but is not yet decided, and many more of that sort we must expect. It is Reported that Mistress Esther Temple is, or will be, Maid of Honour."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

"... Hettey was talkt of to be a Maid of Honour a yeare agoe, 18 Nov.
but then Dickey told me she had been refused; but now the Tables 1705.
are turned, she may have the favour which may make her the
Welcomer at Wotton. I fancy Mr. Gape may lose it, both at the
Commtee. and in the House. Its hard Swimming against the Tyde."

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

24 Nov.
1705.

"... There is no foreign News except by way of Holland of the
Surrender of Barcelona; at home the Wigg Party strengthens every
day. This inst. the Commtee. was to report the St. Albans Elec-
tion; wherein the Whigs have revokt King James' Charter; other-
wise to bring in Killigrew, tho' the Duke of Marlborough procured
the Grant of this Charter, was by it made High Constable of the
Tower, and his Brother made a Freeman of St. Albans by the same
Charter. I fear we must expect little Mercy from their hands. Lady
Wharton's brought to bedd of a Girle, soe One Wigg the Less
perhapps." Sir Thomas then gives particulars of the settlement
of his estate at Eyden and Stanford, which requires an Act of
Parliament.

He writes again about settlements: the debt on this estate was 29 Nov.
not of his own contracting, but his father's; he wishes to make the 1705.
best arrangements he can, for the satisfaction of the "Honoured
Person your Daughter and my Wife, with our Deare Child".

Sir Thomas has left that "close place" (the House of Commons) 6 Dec.
"for a Little Respite of Air at Stanford. They have been affrighted 1705.
all day with violent high winds and storms."

At the time of their marriage, he had not been in a position to
make settlements on his wife, a duty he performed later on.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

20 Dec.
1705.

"My Lord,—Tho' I am not so well thought of as I cou'd wish, or
esteem'd so Punctuall to the Principle of Honour of performing
my promises, yet I submittedly Desire to effect your Lordsp.'s Satis-
faction by a Deed from Mr. Martyn, which I will take Care to have
safely conveyed to you before Saturday night. Your Lordsp.'s last
Letter to my Deare reproacht mee of forgetting my Promises, and
a frequent digression from my Word; I humbly begg this one Per-
formance may be Abstracted from that unhappy Number—by
being willing to please, I displease; however, of the Former I will
always vouchsafe your Lordshipp the Best Endeavours of a Dutiful
Son and obedient Servant,

THOMAS CAVE."

28 Dec.
1705.

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... Sir Thomas got safe home after a tedious bad journey, the wayes being so extreme bad, which was the occasion he did not call at Claydon to pay his Duty there, but sent you the Deed of Settlement, which I hope proves to your liking. . . . We have made bold to send you a fat Swann, and humbly beg yours and Mother's acceptance of it, wishing you a happy Christmas and New Year."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

28 Dec.
1705.

"'Tis a very fine Bird and what our Country doth not Aford; I believe some of our Neighbours will be at the Eateing of it and I shall desire them to join with us in Drinkeing the Donors' Healths."

29 Dec.
1705.

"Pegg Cave . . . I have the Deed you mention and hope its very well for Sir Thomas and your Son, that is Satisfactory to me, who am no wayes concerned but for the good of his child; which I'me sorry to hear hath been ill, and now congratulate you on his recovery. I thanke you for the fatt Swann you sent us, and shall sett it a swimming (when we Eate it) in Drinking your Good Healths."

At the end of the next year, December 1, 1706, a little girl was born to them in "Park Place in St. James' St., near St. James' Palace", and christened by Mr. Vickers, Elizabeth. "Her gossips, her two [step] grandmothers, Lady Fermanagh & Lady Dowager Cave, and the Lord Craven."

Another girl, Penelope, was born April 30, 1709, "in Cecil Street in the Strand", christened by Mr. Vickers (his name is variously spelt in the two entries); "Gossips, Ralph Palmer junr., Mrs. Catherine Verney, and Miss Penelope Cave".

A second son, Thomas, born 27th May 1712, completed the family; "Gossips, Sir Thomas Dunck, Sergt. John Cheshire, and Elizabeth Verney".

There was a panic after this baby's birth; he was ill himself, and a little sister was sickening with smallpox, but Penelope, Mrs. Vickers, came to the rescue, and carried off the child to her own house to nurse her.

22 Oct.
1706.

Lord Fermanagh to Lady Cave

"... I sopose you wanted noe Chatt the day they visited you, for the Ancient Gentlewoman is a merry Greek, its wondersome that neither Will nor his Sisters are yet coupled, who all live in

the Market for such Matters. . . . Mr. Butterfield's daughter Smith, when she came to Chester, found that the Yacht was gone for Ireland the day before, so she's gone for Holly Head, and desines thence in the Packet Boate."

Sir Thomas and Lady Cave had each been ill: Lord Fermanagh concludes that it is because they are absent from each other.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

3 Dec.
1706.

"My Lord,—. . . On Sunday about 11 of the Clock my Wife was delivered of a daughter, and is I thank God as well as possible in that condition. We must begg the Assistance of my Lady to make it a Christian, with my Mother whom I shall intreat to be her Partner, with Lord Craven to conclude the Vow. . . . I am provided for Caudle better than expected, for his Grace the Duke of Moun-
tague has sent his Gentn. with nine doz. of fine French White Wine, as a present against my Wife's lying in."

Lord Fermanagh wishes that the child may be blessed with all the virtues of its Gossips. "The Promotions are so many, and you being so near the Royal Palace, I know not how your Modestie will excuse you from being one of those which are favoured with new Titles or places." He reminds his daughter that she got about again too soon after the birth of her last child, "therefore do not do so now, I intreat you, lest you take cold, which may bring a cough and then to Asses Milk again".

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

17 Dec.
1706.

"I have been guilty of the same mistake with you in wishing my countryman Mr. Hopkins joy of his place under the Lord Sunderland, but tis Robt. Hopkins, his Uncle, who has the favour of the Nephew's German Travells. We hear the King of Portugall is dead, and cannot tell what mourning is yet designed. . . . My Lady was so kind to favour us with some of the black bread of which we have made some brawn, and it proving indifferently good we presume to beg yours and Lady Fermanagh's acceptance of a collar."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

"I'm sorry our allie Don Pietro is dead, I had much rather it had been our adversarie Monsieur Louis that we might have mourned in sack and Claret. . . . We all salute you and Deare Pegg, which with blessings on the children concludes this from Your Loving
Father,
FERMANAGH."

22 Dec.
1706.

24 Dec.
1706.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... I suppose you are safely returned from Berks, and in this Accident, as if our own, must equally Lament our friend Mr. Bromley [brother of the Dowr. Lady Cave], whose house at Bagginton in Warwickshire is a day or two ago burnt down to the ground. I dont yett ask or hear what part of his Goodes are saved, but I feare few, the fire breaking out in the middle of the house."

The story goes that Speaker Bromley received the news, which had been sent up by special messenger, seated in the chair. Very calmly, and without quitting the chair, he gave directions for the immediate rebuilding of his ruined home. Queen Anne came to see it and planted a cedar in the grounds. The motto on the new house was "Phoenix Resurgens", but it was burnt down again in 1889, and nothing remains of it but the outer walls and the inscription.¹

Sir Thomas continues:

"This is our Domestick Newes, Foreign is much otherwise. The report is the Cittadel of Modena and Valenza have surrendered, and many more expected to follow their example, also that the Vizier is strangled, he having taken Bribes of the French; another discourse is that Sir John Jennings in the West Indies has mett with seventeen French Ships and taken sixteen of them."

2 Jan.
1707.

Sir Thomas Cave understands that Lord Fermanagh is parting with his butler; he has seen a very neat, civil fellow, and inquired of him what was his lowest wages—he resolved on ten pounds per annum.

Lord Fermanagh replies:

5 Jan.
1707.

"As to a Butler, I would have a sightly fellow and one that has had the Smallpox, and an honest man (for he is intrusted with Store of Plate) and can shave, but I give no such wages as this man's lowest resolves on, so will not trouble you any further about him. . . . I'me sorry for Mr. Bromley's misfortune, which I heare happen'd by aireing his house, and that his man had like to have been burnt indeavouring to save some writings. God preserve us all from the like sad Accidents."

27 May
1706.

Sir Thomas is sorry to hear that his father-in-law is parting with his beagles. He has too many of his own at the moment, "very pretty busy beagles that ever I saw, to want to purchase them",

¹ *The Speakers of the House of Commons*, A. T. Dasent. (John Lane, 1911.)

but if Ralph Verney should wish to have them over Addington Firs or Twyford Grounds, he will be delighted to send over his hounds for that diversion.

Lady Cave has recovered sufficiently to venture abroad to see the procession to St. Paul's, or, as her father puts it, "to see A Multitude of Coaches". She has been to visit Cousin Vickers, and from thence to

"My Aunt Cradock's, who is got deeply in the tantrams again, and the two Virgins there still remain soe. . . . My Cousin Nicholas, who had been a weak man a long time, Dyed last Saturday, and is brought this night to Covent Garden to be buried. . . . I have not seen any of Mr. Luttrell's family a long time, but I hear Mr. Francis is going to marry to Mr. Nicholas's daughter that was some time ago at Claydon. . . . I'll be sure to get the Tea my Mother desires, but I feare 'twill be considerably dearer, the price rising continually." 24 Jan.
1707.

Sir T. Cave to "The Hon. R. Verney"

"To my promise I will give you a short account of our journey, which we performed first day with Ease to Aylesbury, without any prejudice to our little travellers. The roads between Aylesbury and Claydon were excessive Badd, and we had one of the Coach Horses Lame; our rest at Claydon till Monday did us a great service, tho' whilst there we receiv'd the Unwelcome tidings of these following Accidents. My Gardener unfortunately fell into the River in the Park and was drowned, it proves a great Loss to me in the Garden; my Coach Horse called Squeaker, that lay at Grass this winter, broke down the gate of the meadow and hung himself upon the Barre, that he burst his body and dyed the night we came home; the other was my Grey Mare received an hurt on the Breast and by the Bruise hath died. . . . As to our present health, we enjoy it more perfectly here than in town; I thank God my little Boy is better and the Girl very well after their journeys." 24 Mar.
1707.

In September, Sir Thomas and Lady Cave have been to the Warwick Races, where Sir Thomas tried his luck with an old horse, but Colonel Mortimer won the Plate: "so we satisfi'd ourselves", Lady Cave writes, "with seeing the town, which indeed is very pretty, and a fine Church with severall very fine Monuments well worth seeing; there was a Ball in town at night, but I was so considerate not to go to it, having a very great cough and cold". 20 Sept.
1707.

Sir Thomas is very anxious about her, and they have written to Dr. Chamberlain, but his prescriptions have not as yet done her good, and she cannot procure any asses' milk "for Love or Money".

5 Oct.
1707.

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... I am extreemly concerned for the loss of poor Perry, he being I believe a true Lover of you and the family, and an old Servant whom I feare you'le much miss."

The runaway of 1699 had so completely mended his ways that he had risen to the dignity of an epitaph eulogium—He lived respected and died lamented.

20 Oct.
1707.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"I found my dear Wife at my return much brisker and easier then when I left her, we had the good fortune to hear at Sir John Chester's of an Ass, for which I immediately sent and bought it for three pounds. . . . At the second day of the Lutterworth Race, my Deare had entered my horse, and by Virtue of his fleet heales wonn the Tankard, which is a very good one to drink Asses' Milk out of, it being somewhat large. After the Race was over the Ladyes went to Mrs. Cole's, and there spent the night in Dancing and Cards, they had a complete Sett of Good Dancers of six couple. The day after, Lord and Lady Denbigh, Mrs. Craven, Mrs. Hales and Mrs. Cole dined with us, and spent the day in Cards and other Neighbourly Divertions, till one of the Clock in the Morning; at which hour by the help of our Moon Lanthorn they sett out for Lutterworth and got safe thither. By this account of our Time your Lordship may suppose my Wife pretty well."

In the autumn of 1707, Sir Thomas Cave lost his colleague in Parliament. He writes to Lord F.:

3 Nov.
1707.

"... Mr. Verney has not long survived his wife, dying last Thursday of a high fever; his death will occasion the choice of a new Member, I find Mr. Palmer of Carleton designs to offer himself, but whom the Gentlemen will pitch on, is not yet known."

10 Nov.
1707.

John Verney, M.P. for Leicestershire, was eldest son of Sir Richard Verney, 3rd Baron Willoughby de Broke, and brother of Diana Verney, then Lady Shuckburgh of Shuckburgh. Sir Thomas "is very busy canvassing for Mr. Geffry Palmer, our candidate in lieu of Mr. Verney. His opponent is Lord Sherard, who as most think will not much prejudice Mr. Palmer, however, in prevention much care is taken on our side". Later in the day, Sir Thomas hears "from Mr. Palmer that Lord Sherard desists and one Mr. Ashley opposes him".

Sir Thomas Cave writes again:

"The lively repairs in my Deare's state of health is shown by her cheerful countenance and seldom coughing; she totally abstains from eating flesh and the Ass's Milk agrees well with her. If she apprehends any danger of a Relapse, I hope she will think of removing to town for seasonable assistance, and I wish, my Lord, the perfect remedy lay in me to serve so Good a Woman and so Dear a Wife.

24 Nov
1707.

I must thank your Lordship for the Domestick News and the indeavours to repeal the Game Act; I wish you could inform me who first motioned it in the House, and whether Churchman or Fanatick, if the first the information may be of service to us. I am glad to hear Mr. [Browne] Willis succeeds so well, being a very honest Gentleman."

"... Our Christmas has been dull, neither has the new year begun with more mirth, all our neighbours being gon out of the country, save Mrs. Breton, who was delivered about a week agon of a son and Heir to the great joy of all that family, and the Ceremony ended with the ringing of all the Bells in that country with the new Relations etc. suitable for such occasion."

7 Feb.
1709.

Sir Thomas announces the birth of another daughter: "Verney is very fond of his new Sister, inquiring also often after his old one, as he calls her, who I hope is very well."

3 May
1709.

"I thank God my wife is pretty well, the Doctor soon designes her a whole course of his Studious Compounds in which may the blessing of God be seriously infus'd with success of perfect Recovery. We blush to think of what intending trouble your Lordship and my Lady so generously desire by our sending down the little ones. The repeated Instances of your Obligations make us presume that you'll as freely pardon the Coming Down of the Sweet Babes the latter end of next week."

4 May
1709.

Sir Thomas Cave has been on a visit to Baddow, when little "son Verney filled up the bottom of the Chaise and diverted us in the journey much. . . . My wife continues pretty well and this day dined with me and cousin Vickers in the Parlour. Verney is mighty well."

28 May
1709.

"I can't but repeat the inexpressible joy conceived of Dr. Chamberlyn's great assistance, by which my dear Wife is grown hearty and looks well. . . . Miss Penn grows mightily (with promises of Beauty). We have often endeavoured to assist your weak appetite by a little change of diet, as in some Mackrell, but till yesterday could not find any worth sending. . . . The last Spring infectious cold has seized on most horses in town, and some with Death, the chief applications are Scalded Brann, Warm

12 May
1709.

Water, and Mild Exercise while able to bear it, I doubt not its reaching the Country."

15 May
1709. Lord Fermanagh, in thanking him for the mackerel, says that brother Baker sent a dozen whittings and a quarter of hundred of smelts, "so that by you two we've been highly feasted, but we have put half of them in pickle".

Sir Thomas reports that Lady Cave has had a relapse, with extreme pain, and he is very anxious about her.

14 May
1709. "... At present my three fine children are well, but alas if the fountain head be muddy'd the lower waters can't long enjoy their usual clearness."

21 Dec.
1709. "I remember last year your Lorship tried a new experiment of a Swan in a Pye, and as it took effect to please tis wisht your Lordship would try a second with a Cygnett which we have sent with a brace of small Cock."

5 Feb.
1710.

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

"Deare Ralph,—I was in good hopes you'd have made a tripp this way now so many of your friends are here; Last Tuesday your Bro. and Sister Cave, Pegg Adams with Mr. Bond and servants, came all hither on horseback; on Tuesday Captain Lloyd comes from London, Brigadier Pearce and his youngest Daur. are still here; your sister Lovett and her 2 girles are very well, & soe are all this family, I bless God for it. Sir Tho. & Mr. Bond have been two dayes already in my Woods, and kill'd severall Phesants etcetera, and threatened to doe more execution; though the little Baronett hath much adoe to gett clear of the Blackthorns, or brussle thorough the tall Underwood, but he hath a good heart and egg'd on by the hopes of Game. Little Tinkard is as eager as they, for tho' they putt him in an Oven and tied him up with a rope, he gott out of the one and Knaw'd the other in two, & accompany'd em all day a-shooting."

Sir Thomas sends to Ralph Verney, at Baddow, a copy of

"The Princess Sophia's answer to the Earl of Rivers, at his first Audience: 'My Lord. Your Person is welcome. You tell me you have given me great Instances of your Esteem, I thank you for it. You tell me You are ready to give me greater, I don't believe You can, nor doe I desire it. You have Setled the Reversion of the Crown upon me after the death of the Queen, whom God long preserve, I doe assure You I will assert my right. I have the grand Allyance to my Assistance, and if any man shall attempt to deprive me of my Right, be it at his peril.'"

*Sir Thomas Cave, at Stanford, to Lord F., at Claydon*8 Sept.
1711.

"My Lord,—After many thanks for the trouble given and civilitys received, I must give your lordship a short narrative of our progress from Claydon to this place. Certainly no man ever had such docile guirls to deal with, as will appear from their first getting out of the coach to a pott of Coffee and bread and butter. Then out They trip't to see and be seen, that by two of the clock they had traversed the best part of the town over, from that hour We coach't it to Port Mead, where was I think Dom Comm, and Lord Craven won the first day's prize of 55 guineas from Captain Bray and Coll. Mortimer, thence We visited your Chapman Beaubart at the Physick Garden, and Magdaline Coll., so to Supper, by which Time my laydeys were throly hammstiff. The next morning we finish't the inspection of curioiteys of the University, and din'd with my cos. Beaucham of Trinity Coll., who kindly accompanied us that afternoon to Blenheim, which after viewing proves a great house with little rooms and less for cost; the gardens are larg and in good order but not the prettiest; there are some foreign Statues and Marbles very Curious but not set up; by this we lost that daye of horse-racing for Bucks an Does which Lord Brooks won. The next day We set out for Eyden and in our way took a view of the Duke of Shrewsbury's house at Ethrop, wherein will be a great many very good rooms and as truly convenient. We stayed at Eyden till after dinner yesterday, and I thank God found all my young ones very brisk and well.

We all send your Lordship and my Lady our Dutyes, with Services to Sister Verney, Miss Lovett, cos. Lloyd and Ev'ry body elsce."

There is a postscript of:

"All the polls delivered to—Lord Abingdon—Doctor Garner at All Souls, Doctor Charlott—University—Doctor Hammond left with Mr. Rawling Manciple of Ch. Ch. Doctor Turner of Corpus Christi. Doctor Ford of Ch. Ch. and Doctor Braithwaite of New College."

Doctor Blakiston, President of Trinity College, Oxford, has kindly sent the following notes on this letter:

"Ian Beaucham was a scholar of Trinity in 1677, age 17, a Fellow in 1685 to 1717. He was the son of James Beaucham, said to be nephew of Bishop Ken. Ian Beaucham is very careful not to be called John and has no final p. He would be a comfortable bachelor fellow of about 41 at the time of Sir Thomas Cave's visit. Beaubart is Jacob Bobart the botanist; Ethrop is the Talbots' new house,

now a Jesuit School. Dom Comm is I suppose Domus Communis, the whole Common Room. The spelling guirls is very pleasing."

Sir Thomas Cave's stepmother and his sisters were living at Eydon, which belonged to the Stanford property.

2 June
1711.

"... We reached home last night [after a visit to Claydon] and found my two girles in high expectation, the eldest has a troublesome cough, which had made her look thin, Penne is gron mightily, both fair and pretty. I think those that so lately exclaimed at the bad road Cambuz'd us, there being more danger of being choakt with dust than with sticking fast."

9 July
1711.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... Since our Armyes abroad are so Idle I feare we shall pay Em extravagantly deare for their Quiet; they now Enjoy the Umbrage of Peace more than We at home; but I hope, that before Warwickshire Archer and Sir Wm. Boughton's son whack Em (who are returning to travell) his Grace will see the insides of some of the Monsrs., or—'Da pacem in diebus nostris Domine' must be our Xmas Ballad.

Since I had the honour to have two of my horses remount to land Privateers, it has gott me some Credit, as an advertisement where good horses are, which will appear by one of your country Equinall Criticks coming to me the other day, and I had the honour to please him with a Mare which perhaps your Lordship may know, and Ime sure you'll think six pounds too little for a good one, the Gentleman has the best horse next yours in Claydon. He has often been in your Church as I have seen but I never heard him speak there, however he may reckon him more of the Country than me, and I wish he woud, for I have some precious ones, but they must come quickly or my Doggs will eat Em. My Lord Craven is made Warden of Whittlewood Forrest and goes this week to take Possn. of it. Lord Denbigh call'd here yesterday on his way for Newnham from London, he sayd that place is barren of news."

13 Aug.
1711.

"... The uncertainty of the Seasons has made a generall complaint in most parts, and has not escapt my smaller family; Verney and Penne having been troubled with heats coming over great parts of their bodyes, which we have been informed were the Chicken-pox, they're pretty well, but not quite recovered; the rest rubb on the old way."

5 Sept.
1711.

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney

"... I had a surprizingly well wrote letter from Master Cave's own hand, indeed it is to admiration in penmanship for such a Child."

*Lady Cave, at Baddow, to Lord Fermanagh*11 Feb.
1712.

"... Our journey here is attended with colds, by the Sharp uncertain weather which we could not wholely fence against, our fellow-traveller, a woman, being all the way excessive Sick and wanting Air, of which we had the comfortable effects most plentifully. Sir Thomas, my Brother, and Jack P. are gone out with Guns and Spaniels enough to Scare the country, but we don't expect any dreadfull execution to insue."

*Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh*3 Apr.
1712.

"... Last week both my sisters at Eyden were marry'd."

*Lord Fermanagh, at London, to Ralph Verney, at Baddow*5 June
1712.

"Last Tuesday Your Mother, Sister, Niece Lovett, Selfe, and Savill, left Claydon and got well to this place the same day, and Yesterday I was in all Hast sent for to the Child's Christening, Dr. Chamberlain apprehending it won't live, and so it was named Thomas. The Witnesses were Sir Tho. Dunk, Serjt. Cheshire, and Betty Verney. The Parson was some small Reader, but I don't knowe him. I doubt Sherburne Lane will be very angry that he was not employed, but I doe not Intermedle with Buckm. Street affairs. I found the Parson (if he be soe) there, and we stayed two hours for Cheshire; the Child is very little, yet it may in time be such another as his sister Betty. I am grown very Deaf againe, and cannot heare any sound, which renders me melancholly. The Daughter of Dr. Stanhopp, Dean of Cantry., Is married to Bishop Burnett's son. I am very glad your Miss is well again, I hope your little Boy and my Daughter are very well this hot weather. Be careful of yourselfe and keep yourselfe warme."

*Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh*9 June
1712.

"... The Reason this was not the Companion of the Speech is the Chagreen change of the State of my Family, my young Son having been extreemly ill for this five or six dayes, and continuing languishing, that I expect every moment to be his last, and indeed his early deprivation has so disordered my wife, that nothing is so fear'd as her Relapse. The confusion this gives me may not be proper from my own hand, that I shall suspend it. We had the good fortune to have my Uncle Palmer here at its first complaint, as Representant of Sir Thomas Dunk, and soon after Serjt. Cheshire, and with Sister Verney; that we immediately sent for the Parish Minister and Xned it Thomas (and unfortunately it

seemed since its life not to enjoy it). I shall leave this place to-morrow for Daventry, with Thoughts much chequered on acct. of the Premises."

21 June
1712.

"... I thank God the condition of my family is pretty good, Betty being past danger, and Tommy mends finely."

15 July
1712.

To Ralph Verney

"... I heard yesterday from Claydon which place they reached with a sett of new Horses, my Lord has been afflicted with the Gout and Chollick ever since he left this town, but hopes for relief from the wholesom countrey air, to which also I must have recourse for health, being almost suffocated with the nauseousness of London. . . . I think Aunt Palmer the most just creature I ever saw."

22 July
1712.

Ralph Palmer, from Little Chelsea, sends a letter by the "Faire Hands" of Betty Verney, who has been with the Palmers at Little Chelsea, and is now going on to Baddow. There is so much dis-temper among horses, and such violent coughs, that Mr. Palmer expects to remain horseless the ensuing winter.

26 July
1712.

Lady Cave writes to her father that her children are mending, and are now fit for travelling homewards. She wishes for a visit from her sister Lovett, but feels that she should first pay her respects to her father at Claydon. "We have this moment heard from my Brother Verney that my sister [Catherine] was brought to bed of a girl, and both in a fine way."

28 July
1712.

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

"I am glad to find my Sister safely delivered, tho' of a sort the less esteem'd in this vain world, and theres yet no good to be don without Em. I am proud of the favour you doe me in asking my care and tuition for that pretty lady. . . . I hope you'll think of some representative and be pleased to deposite 4 Guineas among the necessary Women of the Bedchamber. . . . Pray kiss the Gossips my partners as much as if I was present to do it—and don't anywise omit my respects to the Lady in the Straw."

This was Ralph and Catherine's second daughter, Catherine.

7 Aug.
1712.

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... We've been a long visit today at Mr. Speaker's, that I'me tired, it being late, & I have the Courtier to equip."

This was Sir Thomas's relative, William Bromley; after his retirement from the Chair, he became the leader of the Tory party.

Ralph Palmer, at Chelsea, writes to Ralph Verney to announce the birth of a son, and hopes that "Your Deare Precious is past all danger by this time, and all her Little Rogues well about her." 11 Aug. 1712.

In August Sir Thomas was ill of a fever, the maids were all ill at the same time, and he reports that his wife became as thin as she was, in nursing him. He hopes the Claydon party are enjoying the "Cheating Quainton Races".

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

1 Sept.
1712.

"Sending the acceptable news of Sir Thomas's amendment, and in time for the widows' race, in order to which we went to her House, where were recd. with great Civility and entertained with a generous freedom, all things being very handsome and a cheerful welcome. We had our Leishr. Knight's Company to meals, after which he shere'd off, but we stayed to see all. The first day our old horse was beaten, tho' with great credit, all the others being distanced by one Underwood's Gelding, who gott the prize of a large Punchbowle and a Cup; a Wendsday was a handsome Cup won by an Honest innkeeper of Northampton, and both dayes devirtions concluded with a Ball, and neither of which I was at, thinking it not safe to keep Sir Thomas late after his illness; a Thursday we spent in visiting some of that Neighbourhood, and with much adoe got away by Friday noon and came home well."

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

14 Sept.
1712.

"My Lord,—I am sorry you have such indifferent sport at Claydon, but I think tis usuall, however I much wonder the Whigs let Lord Gower take away their Plate. I'm convinct his G. of Marlboro' had sufficient reason of being asham'd to show himselfe to the world. I'me not a little pleased with Lord Wharton's Luck at Aylesbury, and may they never Succeed better. I don't doubt of your mirth and jollity in dancing and Crammgutt [?]. We poor soules lead a very Dull Solitary Life, and if we dance it must be in our Sleepe in a crazy state. I ventur'd to the Merry Widow, not in hopes of gaining a Prize soe much as to try the speed of my horse. There were 4 contending, Ld. Plimouth, Mr. Hayes, formerly Master of my Brother's Black Slugg, myselfe, and one Underwood; now the Judgment the Gentleman past on my Steed was too quick, as the Horses were Strangers, and had never before runn together, however Hopeless pusht well for it, and fairly beat the Crackt up Steed. You may tell my Censor, my Horses know their distance;

I suppose it Somebody that did not know me. We were extream civilly treated, etc. Sir George met us.

Whilst we were at Loughboro' Race there happened at None-Eaton, in Warwickshire, an earthquake, which in an hour demolished the greatest part of the Town though new built; it lyes in the road to the Colepits, and people that passt throu in the evening and returning the next morning, wondered they could not repass, as well they might, for the town lay in rubbish. Few or any were hurt, the Market-House by its fall awak't Em all, that they by that means Escapt with their lives; from which like Good Lord deliver us."

20 Sept.
1712.

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

"I'me sure You'l be glad to hear I'me now capable of taking a Feild-Dance with you; and if I don't see you before leaving the Country, You'll find it harder to satisfy me than Retcheren does Mesnager. I find there is a great breed of Hares, which makes well for us merciful men, and may we have leisure enough to pick up our shares of Em." [Details follow of the various horses to be sold after the races; Sir Thomas had so much trouble over the horse that Mr. Vickers bought before, that he is not too anxious to be mixed up in any other transactions.] "I had a letter the other day from the Gentleman in Sherburne Lane, who still did me the favor of seeing him here at our Race in order to be Re-mounted, and tis be hop't very well. I shall say but one word more: never wear better Doggs or Horses than are now at Stanford.—Yours Affectionately."

10 Oct.
1712.

To Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—That I had not the opportunity of meeting you at Brackley is the only reason I can have to repent my not meeting there. I must confess my Spiritts would have bin upon the frett to see King Tom runn away with the prize, and well may the Whigs have the best Horses since they have all the money. . . . Mine is the strongest Horse at Lutterworth, the course being big I might have hopes of the Punchbowle to sleep in (it being very larg). Had I your good wishes of success? . . . I never expect much from Captain Chapman's Horse, for your Lordship has heard him Crack up to Me, which is a sure sign of little worth. . . . I am convinc't in what your Lordship rightly observes, that the Essex and Stanfordians are no wise parallells; we expect the merry Widdow here on Monday next, but Sir Geo. was sent for to towne on Privy Matters, which I feare will allay our Mirth, but our best endeavours towards repaying her Great Civilityes shall not be wanting.

Mr. Vickers is just come in and has got on his Silk Capp already."

*Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney*16 Oct.
1712.

"Deare Ralph,—The four Bakers went home in my Coach, in which on return came the two Cambridge Bakers, Sam and James. . . . I have this week drawn Chalcroft Ponds, out of which we tooke 200 Large Carpes, the best and biggest that I ever saw at Claydon, and the people thinke we have left as many in the Pond as we took out, though not so large; I wish you and my Daur. were here at the Eateing of Em. I have put about 170 into 5 Ponds in the Park. Bror. Baker's youngest Child Narcissus died last week, but he hath a Baker's Dozen still living—Eight Girles and Five Boyes. Our Quarter Session was held at Buckingham, where were Lord Cheney, Myselfe, and about 16 or 18 Justices more, and but two Whigges amongst us, Nellie D. and Dr. Busby. The former was Disappointed of being Chairman, and Captn. Chapman was ordered into the Chair."

Lady Cave writes to her father, having had a houseful of guests, that

"they have now agreed to leave us alone, to the comfort and injoyment of Long Evenings and Dark Dayes, which Sir Thomas and his Sports will pass off and be pleased with so long a Playtime; and be glad of your Company to eate a Xmas pye. Our Duties and Services as Due."

17 Oct.
1712.*Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh*14 Dec.
1712.

"My Lord,—I have been long in your debt, and to say there has been no subject copious enough for a letter, would be a thred-bare plea; yet I'll only alledg my Wife's frequent writing to my Lady. . . . Mr. Chester is with me in full expectation of often Hunting, but the Weather has prov'd cross and unseasonable, that I have had less of that dear diversion than was expected at the Prorogation of the Parliament, but the practice of the Pipe has been customary in Frosts. I wish your Lordship and I could find that villain Mackartney, whose Preemium would serve well towards keeping a Jolly Xmas. Mr. Chester often wishes for Lady Fermanagh for his partner at Cards, and if your Lordship could favour us with your Company, and the rest with you, 'twould be an additional Satusfaction towards passing off easily the approaching Festivall; and we might like zealous Patriots go up to town together."

*Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh*4 Jan.
1713.

"Honoured Sir,—I write this the fourth; being my Son's Birthday, several of oure neighbours intend to honour the celebration to-

morrow with us here; which woud hinder my writing if defer'd, and now I think it too long without offering our Seasonable wishes of mirth and Happyness to all our Claydon friends, but I hope not too late for their acceptance of our Respectfulest wishes for multiplying years to all; and to let you know we have sent a Swan which I hope you'll receive safe, and find it fat and good. I'm obliged to my Cousen Vickers for her kindness to and great Character she gives my Daughter, and am glad to hear by all hands of her health. . . . Verney is next week to enter the School Role at Rugby."

16 Jan.
1713.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—I must confess, I did not despair of seeing You, till the Coach was empty'd, when I found a great disappointmt., and Nothing cou'd repair it but the hopes of your disposing your-Self more to satisfaction, however I shou'd have interpreted it, as a Kindness and an honour to Me. We have had the Verneys home for the Festivalls, and the fourth Instant was honourably celebrated by the Presence of Lord Denbigh & his family, with our Neighbour Cole and Shuttleworths, with many more uninvited guests, that two Tables were fill'd, with 12 or 14 apiece, and All true Loyall Tors, but the London Postmaster, Who yet swallow'd down a pint glass of Ale to the poor Boy's health; on Tewsday last he set out post for London, where he safely arriv'd on Wendsday, we hear'd this day. And we soon expect the Jolly Soldier to supply his place. Cards are the Ladyes' dayly Drudgery, as well as in Bucks; yesterday din'd here one Mr. Duncombe, a Neighbour of Yours, of the right Side too, they tell me, but I lately caught one of your Countrymen of the wrong sort, coursing in my grounds, for which attempt he pay'd same; his Name was Carter of Aston Abbot, a great presbyterian. I wish you don't forward Jack Shap-jack of Baddow in a Journey hither, to steal dogs; he last year conceiv'd thoughts of such an enterprise, and had he such a helping head-piece he had don it, no doubt. This is the worse time he can choose, there being a new lock lately put to the door. Tis highly probably too my Quack-Medicine Uncle may be with You, that amongst yee all I must expect little mercy, except the Ladyes happen on my Side. I must suppose your Lordship keeps up the old Custom of supplying Baddow with Dogs by Rapine, and shou'd be glad to know the colour & size of this, that went with you, for Severall of Neighbours have lately lost some & a good preemium offer'd.

I am truly sorry the Poor Queen has been so ill, & as glad that she amends, especially from the reflections of the ill Consequences of her Death & what Confusion it must have created, while affairs are so unsettled. No doubt the Wgs. were very uppish during her

Indisposition, & I dare say the Torys as much dijected, of which they had Sufficient reason. I wish by change of Air, you may find ease in your leggs; we all continue pretty well here, except my Wife, whose Eyes are till Sore and angry. We desire your acceptance of Dutys and Services, with the trouble of Saluting all Baddow family with Services on our behalf."

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

26 Jan.
1713.

"My Lord,—I'm sorry to find that you are confin'd by that troublesom Companion the Gout, and wish amongst your Innumerable Guests you did not force too great an attendance. It has been a very unhealthfull season, through the uncertainty of the weather, as fickle as some men's temper. Som talk with us, that the Parliamt. will not sitt this fortnight, in less time I hope you will be relieved, that I may be favoured with you per Ailesbury conveyency, for I have thoughts of calling to see the Insolvent prisoner, if not privus devoured by his hungry Creditors. I have lately had a letter from Lord Tamworth, Lord Ferrars Grandson, who is to be my partner next Election, but there's a flying report of Ld. Sherrard and Gilbt. Picering opposing us, tho' they have not yet sent about, so I hope tis nothing. My Son at Rugby is mighty brisk, and highly delighted with his new habitation."

Lady Cave writes to her father:

"I already feel the approaching effects of all people now thronging to Westminster, from whence I wish Em soon to depart in peace."

8 Feb.
1713.

Sir T. Cave, from London, to Lord Fermanagh

17 Mar.
1714.

"My Lord,—The Style of Yours confirms you health which you know we both wanted here. I'm sorry you escap't Aylesbury electors and Church Musick, for the last of which you know well to avoid; indeed I intended to have enquired of the success and expeditioned down last night, but Woodstock Election at the Bar of the House kept us till 8 without eating: 'twas the most Pittifully managed that ever I heard, and at last declared void. My Aunt declares Us both Knaves to the Queen and Country, Dutch Deserters, and what not, but I come off the better by your Leading the Vann, sheel never forgive You and Me. . . . Tomorrow the Little Captain and the Tall Knight set out for Northamptonshire, with many corner prayers, your Lordship knows to ask one favour begets another, that as I'm not good at sett speeches, I beg you'll ask those that Excuse You to make one for me too, for tis probable I shall be out of Chocolate reach.

I hear my poor wife is now lame of one Arm, but seemed glad of my coming, which is a true Satisfaction to Me."

13 Apr.
1714.

"My Lord,—The Captain and I are this instant arriv'd at this dusty place, for hearing the Serjeant was taking his Tour to fetch up the Midland Members, I was willing to save him the trouble of going Northwards. . . ."

17 Apr.
1714.

"My Lord,—On Tewsday next comes on the report of the Elections of Bucks (Lord Fermanagh and Mr. G. Drake for Amersham, Richard Grenville and Sir Roger Hill for Wendover), and Brackley, that I may be in time to give a Casting Vote, and I'me sorry tis your illness prevents your presence at this time, for assuredly there was never more need of every Individuall Member elected. The Whigs are very troublesome, I shall not repeat Thursday last's fatigue, supposing the Votes to be sent to you."

He sends the words of an Address to the Queen, thanking her for delivering them from "A Land consuming Warr".

24 Apr.
1714.

Sir Thomas Cave, from Westminster, to Lord Fermanagh

"I might possibly omitt the Date of mine, through the excessive hurry and fatigue I have undergon, by a continuall close attendance of the House, that I've never din'd more than two days before Six at night in the week; nor did I goe out for my Chocolate.

The Whiggs drop't very Strangely their Question of Concurrence to the Lords' Address, and excuse it by saying The Lost Sheep were return'd to their own fold; and I suppose they'd not prosecute the Order of this day, viz. that the Emperor will desire to come into the Guarantee of our P. Succession; for the Religious Party I must say show greater confidence to that little Ally than to our present good Protestant Queen. The Grievances of the Protestants in Germany under the late Emperor are very fresh, and as well known not to be worsen'd by this, he is now confederating with a King of his own persuasion, and yet our Wild Whiggs will rather think he'l take part with Us than him, tis really monstrous to see what Lyes and impossibilytyes they suggest to Us; I can equall their Practices at the best to nothing but the Snake in the Grass. They are now pinned down so close by the Lords' Address that tis now confidently said the Sessions will be very short; and the remaining Party Smooth and Quiet. Saint Albans and Buckingham reports come on Tuesday morning next, when I hope to confirm some Chapmen in their seats—and soon after retire to Stanford, for this Parliamentary affairs has so harass'd me that I'me walking very lean in the opinion of my friends, and of my self too."

27 Apr.
1714.

"Tho' I write so lately to You, yet I can't omit telling You how close I stuck to the Members of Bucks, who without my assistance

must have lost their Cause, for we never divided on it. We likewise confirm'd Mr. Pope at St. Albans this day, the Division was 194 Yeas, Noes 138. The Smallpox now sweeps many in town off, and the Lady Anglesea's sister dead of Em—many people in this town think the same of your Lordship. I'm hard put to it for answers, without it be an ill or lame one. I cannot ask your presence, for I cannot now see much occasion for it, things galloping on purely and I hope soon to leave Em in such a posture. The Prince of Darkness told me this morning what he lately wrote to You, and You certainly know well enough how to digest his dark speeches. We hear but little of the Duke of Cambridge, that I think that motion was made with Design and no Intention. Our Leicestershire Galloway soon designs to Leave Bow Street for Bucks, as she tells me—tis odds but I may call there in my Return to Paradise."

"My Lord,—Tho' tis probable, this Script may be the Envoy of my Presence, yet I must ask leave to take notice of one Dubious expression at the beginning of the last to me, viz. that I love London like the Women; I hope soon to ask your Lordship, which is the most Rationall construction of the foregoing phrase, whether to love the town as the Women love it, or for me to love the town as I love Women; I'm sure if tis given for the first, I should never depart from it, if the second, that may still be taken two ways, much or little, and when women is taken in the Plurall number, I don't love em much, for the Singular number is Sufficient for me, and then I love it dearly, which cannot be truly said of me as to this place. The reason of your hearing so long of my coming down is, I always think much of it, before I fix the day, that it may be the more mature.

11 May
1714.

Last night we heard Master Verney is in a fair way of doing well [with smallpox], which is a comfort not only to all his Relations, but beyond the expectations of this time, when so mortall here, and even never known so thick. Lady Baggott lyes still doubtfull, and Lady Padgett with the Lady Anglesea's daughter (on her marriage to Lord Ashburnham) are both just fallen of Em, but adjudg'd to do well. I fear our Cousin Alexr. will appear a more inveterate Whigg than his Brother, except his Wings are enough clipt from attempting mischief. I heard from Stanford that all the three little pretty Children have bad coughs that make them look thinn. I have don no otherwise this month.

On Friday night arriv'd an express from Hanover denoting the Elector's Concern that her Majesty Queen A. should have taken anything ill from him, who never intended a thought worthy of her ill will, and owned her Majty.'s forbidding the Hanover Envoy the Court to be a just proceeding, and denyes his orders to his said Minister to demand the Writt for the Duke of Cambridge—And

your Lordship may now come up very opportunely, for the Elections are over, all the Petitioners for Weymouth and Melcomb Regis are brought in at the Committee, and yesterday the Malt tax granted for one year longer; I hear that Sir John H. Cotton is near marrying one of Sir Ambrose Crawley's daughters. I have taken a place for Thursday next in the Aylesbury Coach."

7 June
1714.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh, "from the House of Commons, at Stanford"

"By this your Lordship will find that I had equall need of an excuse with the Knt. of Bucks. if any would be admitted, but as I remember in the last Call of the House all Pleas of Absence were denied, so that had not the Summons been adjourned, that round-nosed crying Dog might have put Us both into one Kennell room as being so near ally'd, which wou'd have been a worse fate then the Westminster Hell, and I'm sure much dearer. I wish, however, they still adjourn the Call; which will better detain those now in Town; if not, we have near 10 dayes allow'd to make our appearance, in which time I hope You'll be in health good enough to accompany me. I hear the Bill to prevent the growth of Schism occasioned many Whimsicalls and I fancy to see a list of em must be pleasant. I heard that t'other day from my Uncle Palmer, who tells me there is a select Committee appointed to make Cages of Wyre, for conveyance of all the absent lame members etc., that my Aunt Adams is to come down in mine to aire it, and to prevent my being hurt by Jolts in going up by the Carrier, but I have not yet received my Usuall summons from Sir George, who never fails on all urgent occasions, & without which I think to take another mouthfull of agreable Leicestershire aire. . . . All our young ones continue very well and the two Scholars are returned from Rugby."

6 June
1714.

Sir T. Cave to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

"When I came home I found my Wife and Children indifferent well. . . . My Sister Lovett returned to Us yesterday, and says there rages now in Town a very mortall Feaver, which makes me decline the thoughts of going up any more this Session. . . . I brought down my Cousin Walker's son with me, who is a very good Sportsman and a very agreable Companion. I had yesterday one came to buy an horse or two of me, and their eyes not being right I wish to conclude a bargain with him; he likes 'em all extreemly well and thinks he can help to an hatfull of money for my grey mare. He never rode a more pleasant one in his life. I suppose your grounds fare noe better for grass than mine, where tis very low and thinn."

The writing of a letter to Claydon seemed the first duty impressed upon the returned school-boy; Sir Thomas made his boys as civil as he was himself. They seem only to stay a week.

Verney Cave writes from Rugby:

"To the Right Lord Viscont Femana at his Hous at Midle Cladon, Buks. Honoured Sir I hope you have recovered your illnes and are got prety well again. My Mama has had a sad Cold but now she is all Most well again. My Cousin Lovett [his schoolfellow] gives his humble duty to you and to my Lady. I hope my Aunt Verney is well. I hope you will except of These lines and I take it as an honouer if you would let me have an Answer from you, your most Dutyfull Son,
VERNEY CAVE."

7 June
1714.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... The reading of the report was adjourned, as you will see by Friday's votes, that the Resolutions of the Ministry are to impeach of High-Treason Ld. Oxford and Ld. Bolingbroke, and the following persons are secured by the Speaker's Warrant to attend the Committee of Secrecy to be examined, viz. E. H—y, A. M—n, Sir J. A. W—rt, M. P—r, & Mr. H—e."

11 June
1714.

Sir T. Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"I am uncertain of this finding you at Claydon, however am resolved not to omitt the opportunity of writing by this young Mercury, who is now grown weary of this dull place and indeed we are much obliged to him for dispensing with it so long. We have nothing new here but Mr. Shuttleworth's return to Lutterworth with his family. . . . We shall visit our melancholick Widowere Sir Justn. and hope it may prove advantadgeous to Sister Lovett; we also favoured this day our two young Rugbeians, and found Em well, bearing a good Character from their Master."

16 June
1714.

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

"... It may be only the busy season of haymaking that has prevented your writing. . . . It is my opinion that if this weather continues a little longer, Stubble hunting will be soon in fashion, wherein you'l probably be tryed of showing your gallopers performances amongst my Pegaseans . . . perhaps two or three couples of the best beagles may here meet with some metled antagonists, if You dare try Em, and to encourage You to emulation I tell You, mine are the best in Great Brittain. I hope your

26 June
1714.

Son continues well after the small pox, and that it spreads no further in your family. I thank God mine continue all very healthfull this excessive hott weather, wherein our Ladyes are obliged to work in their smocks for coolness, and I per noctem in my shirt. We hear Gen. Pearce is dead, but have too sufficient cause not to credit it, whatever may occasion the Report. Lady Denton is at Finmere with Lady Tyrrill. I hear Lord Fermanagh's going to Town but the Call being still defirred, and little probability of the Houses sitting much longer, I decline all thoughts of seeing London any more this Sessions, tho' Uncle Palmer has been at the trouble and Expense of procuring a Wyre Cage for my Conveyance. We have a great horse Race on Tewsdays Sennight at Rugby, farr exceeding Quainton, & attended by much more honest Spectators. I wish to know if you Was at old Sophy's buryall, and so conclude with all Services to Baddow Hall family, Yr. Affte. Brother & H. Servant,
T. CAVE."

3 July
1714.

"... We have advice that his Lordship is now in Town, where he designs no long stay. Soon after his Honor's return I suppose the Allyes will think of rendezvouzing in Bucks, when twill be an hard time with the Ratts to find room to hid themselves, for there will be a Jolly Crew of Myrmidons. I cou'd earnestly wish harvest ended when we mett. I obey'd your orders to Sister Lovett, whose son is better, and we have sent him over a milcht ass to School, whereby tis hop't he'l receive benefitt. . . . Sir Robert Clerke has buried his Mother at 84 years of age. I thank God we all continue very helthfull this extream hott season, wherein I wonder You choose to breake your young Mare, they always being then more subject to Grease then in cold Weather; but You have success in all undertakings, and I wish You a continuance of it, tho' I find no pity from you on my Losses which I think are on the encreasing part; but I'l not acquaint you yet with Em lest that Quack at Chelsea getts knowledge of it, from whom I despair of marcy, for this Midsummer Moon has quite craz'd his pericranium, of which misfortune I have lately recd. long proof.

We'll have a great horse Race at Rugby for two plates, 6 good Contenders at each, amongst which are two horses, one of Duke Rutland's and one of Lord Portland's. I hear Lloyd is courting a rich old Woman at Isleworth. I wish him good luck to get her money, and he'l be easily persuaded to part with the Rest."

A few days before Queen Anne's death, in an oppressively hot summer, Sir Thomas was looking forward to meeting his brother-in-law at Claydon. It seemed curious to talk of hunting in July; perhaps there was no close time for "pussies". At all events the letter reveals the writer's tastes.

*Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney*26 July
1714.

"... But how shall we hunt to Claydon, for this fine rain makes me madd to think on it—play at Cards I can't, drink I won't, to be idle is lazy—I know you and my Lord will count money, I must reckon my fingers in the interim. I believe my Study must be physick under the equinall sphere, unless you bring Snapjack along with you for I shall be at a loss for day diversions. If your country be like ours, so scorched up without rain, so that my tenants put their cattle into their mowing fields to feed, and hay this year is already very dear; since I came to Stanford we never had wanted water so as we do this year, we have no water for the house."

Sir,—I have been long in your debt, which was occasion'd by an excessive hurry and fatigue about our Election, wherein I have already taken more pains than I ever had thoughts of, but I hope it has been so farr effectuell as to prevent an Opposition; for we cannot learn any Certainty of being opposed, tho' we are not at all obliged to the Whiggs in our parts for itt. They threaten us much, tho' they are hard putt to it to find proper persons for that undertaking. My Lord sent me word that Middleton and Generall Honywood are to oppose Barrington and Child, but your silence of it makes me hope it is not true. I hear his Lordship comes quietly in at Amersham, Fleetwood and crumptback Richard for the County, which Amazes all hearers, but I don't know yet where the fault is. I fear Will Purslin sneaks, but that's our conjecture. I have begun to break my young mare, and fear after the sight of her you'll never like your one."

19 Oct.
1714.

"Having heard of your misofortune by your horse, I can't omitt inquiries after the damages received by it. . . . Indeed your Essexonians have this year had bad luck from your horses, and we Lesterians equally badd in our horses, for I have two blind, which prevents us getting astride or prhaps they might palfrey us down like yours; I don't remember such accidents in A. A.'s Reign, that G. I believe has brought over no good thing with him. Wee my possibly soon know whether our Elections may be Sure, you are happy in having no concern therein; I hear our Father much decry'd for his late Declension for Bucks, and his other choice, and am Forc't to plead ignoramus to it."

8 Nov.
1714.

After making excuses for failing to fulfil an engagement to visit Baddow, he writes:

"Yesterday our House was called over, and the Delinquents ordered into Custody; that they'll have sower sause to their meate for the Sergt. is a griping dog, and will have a delicious bait of this. If I part with my Dogs I hope to remind you of the generous

9 Aug.
1715.

offer, and wish that Jack Snapjack may conduct Em to me. We have not one word of foreign news or domestick, except the sending up the Duke of Ormond's Articles yesterday to the Lords."

3 Dec.
1715.

"... Your Silence was so great, that I apprehended some new Coin'd Lovers of Liberty had inclosed you in the lattice house by the water at Camelsford, therefore the late receipt of yours was the more agreeable, finding your Time was spent in the Echoing Woods, in Chasing Puss, not men. Tis greatly probably your pack is very good, and that you have destroyed many Hares, indeed I cannot say otherwise of my Little Rogues, but if I forget not the Hares in your Country seldom makes such long journeys before Deth, indeed in these Champion parts. Tis pity you cannot supply yourself to satisfaction as well as in the black Mare, to whom your fansey was pertickuler; if you was here I doubt not of giving you full content that way, this part being well stockt with young Hopefull Steeds, trotting fine and galloping well. . . . The not parting with my Currs is no great grivance, and yours were not obtainable as I remember till the latter end of the Season, which would avail as little. We may possibly make some Result on this affair next season, but if our Minds are not as fickle as they have been this year; assuredly mine have such A character that I believe I need not doubt of saying when I tend that way. My former Chapman has been long lifted to Northampton Gael, on the presumption that the Secrets of his Heart were disaffected to someone, on which Accident one of his wives (for he had but two) miscarried and dyed, on which he was admitted to return home for a while in great State, being guarded by 10 Armed Men."

2 Jan.
1716.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... I'm sorry for Bow's Complaints as he was given me for a well bred one; he scarce had seen an hare till I showed him some, and he was then orderly, I hope he'll leave his mutton after a thrashing bout.

"... All our branches have been at home during the Festivall, and are now finely well, tho' the frost had nipt some of their Bellows. The Rugbeans improve very well and the Belles Dames proceed diligently, that in lieu of Company this cold weather we have diverted ourselves in their Severall sciences . . . joying you all of the New Year, your Lordship's Obedt. Son and Servant,

T. CAVE."

2 Jan.
1716.

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

"... You shall be acquainted with all the changes of my mind, which is now grown as wavering as the Weather. I'm sorry you

find it so difficult to be accomodated with a steed, and know not where to impute it, whether to your Fansey or Scarcity of horses; if to the last, your Country is very singular. I did forbear from saying anything of my Studd, well remembering the Jocese banTERS of all Ralphs there are, with the little Credit given to whatt I write. . . . The London Chestnutt has carried me and others very well, he proves very good and Sound both for the Road and a la Chace. The Grey Mare is sound, I may say there's not the fellow of her for pleasure, except it be a sister of her wich I have now bred, 5 years old, gallops fine and trotts easy and well, of all which I doubt not of having a pleasant Colloquy at our next meeting Interview. I could tantalize you too in others, but tis pity; my sett of Coachers is now as compleat as since I Kept any, having very beautiful ones; you'll think I have now said enough but the Contents are true.

Our Weather has been very severe, which has made the Country very unsociably, thro' the Impossibility of travelling, but our Stock of Enfans being now seven, We don't fail of Domestick noise and diversion sufficient, and at this instant you'd fansey the House full of Bears. The Rugbeians improve well and are jolly blades. We all send our services to you and my Sister, with Mr. & Mistresse Pascoll, Cosen Adams and honest Snapjack. Wishing you all a merry New Year."

Lady Cave writes that Sir Thomas will not risk his fine Hunter at the Lutterworth races as he is reserving his horses "for the Great Plate, tho' the Town intercedes Sir Thomas to get their Plate, . . . I have no thought of Figureing in publick till our own Race, Tho' our Shattered Carriage is re-mounted, and we wheele about in it again to our neighbours." 19 Sept. 1716.

Sir Thomas Cave, at London, to Lord Fermanagh

" . . . For my part sharp winds and weather have almost severed my head from the lower Trunck, and perfectly indisposed the whole mass. . . . Great Removes are still talk't of at Court, we are happie in having nought to lose."

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

"Dear Brother,—This must be the Messenger of Joy in one hand, and sorrow in the other, for the first of these Impressions I received safely by my Carrier, a Couple of as fine and Beautiful Beagles as ever I could wish for; it being Lutterworth Race Week, I had no time to divert them or Me till Saturday morning last, when Enquiring for the Jewells to take Em out, twas perceived Lady Nithesdale or Wintoun had taught em on friday evening to make

1 Oct.
1716.

Escape out of the Kennall, to my great concern, for I sett a fansey on Em. I sent one all ways after them, but have no heard of Em; my hopes are that they'll find their way safe to Baddow, whence I am sure of a re-conveyance. My Neighbours wish to know if Cos Jack be at home or gon Sacking, for two have lost a brace of fine Greyhounds, and Ld. Denbigh a couple of fine Beagles, that in short some Snapsack has been amongst us, I'me sorry to think so by my loss. We sent for the Rugbeians home for the Race, but poor V. Cave was so bad with sore Eyes that he was confined by the applications of our learned Female Oculist, which I thank God have had a good effect, they being much clearer and better which gives us hope of a speedy relief.

We lost poor Mr. Breton of Norton by the smallpox after 3 days illness; he was a Verdurer in Rockingham Forest, which Vacancy occasions us some trouble by the present competitors, Sir T. Samuell and Mr. Stratford. I'm engaged for the latter, the first not thinking me worth asking tho' a Cousin. I wish you may see safely the two beautyes, if I find them not."

27 Aug.
1716.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"I must return your Lordship thanks for the seasonable Caution in the shape of a Leathern Vehicle-Cuttler, but you had been early enough in that after We had resolved to have one, for We are not yett settled in the Debate of a Coach or a Cart; the last having of late been so stately-modish, some of Us stickle hard for that, and then Mr. Wheelwright his Highness's Coachmaker must be the Artificier, and Vanbrugh the Plann-Spinner; but if the first prevaile, undoubtedly Mr. Non Inventus (to whom your Lordship sold your old Coach) will be the Author of this new Itinerant Edifice. . . . Our Rugbeans are well, improving daily in their Rudiments, and may the Almighty continue his Blessings to Em all, for at present a more Hopefull and promising Stock between St. James's and Beersheba can't be showed.

I'me greatly sorry I was not in the German Battle with the Tuerks, since the last were so Bang'd, and I should have gott some fine horses like those at Bucks, or old Hatts for Karabine Bucketts, but I hear Ratt-furbelowed Buff Coats are not now us'd in the Janizaries Company, and so will be soon obsolete in other Companies."

Lady Cave writes to her father from Stanford, much pleased that he should remember her eldest boy's birthday:

4 Mar.
1717.

"Honoured Sir,—As the favours of your last letters both to Sir Thomas and me are yet unanswered this is to return my thanks by post, he will verbally offer his own to you in a very few days,

more to prevent the Sergeant's fitting an Appartment for him than any want of him among his Brethren, and if your Lordship is in the same circumstance, he hopes for more of your company in town than he can possibly have in his journey, which must be very speedy, being under engagements to the end of this week here, and resolves to answer to his name the next if called. . . . I think our Distemper is removed from Eyes to Faces and Throats, three of our Men Servants being much swelled and very bad, and I greatly feare Purgeing, Blistering, Bleeding etcet. will not prevent one of Em breaking to a Sore; amongst ourselves thank God we are pretty well, tho' Penny has just had a Spice on't on her eyes; the Rugbeans are well and I will add all their duties."

Betty Lovett sends a well-written little letter; the grand-children are beginning to add to Lord Fermanagh's correspondents.

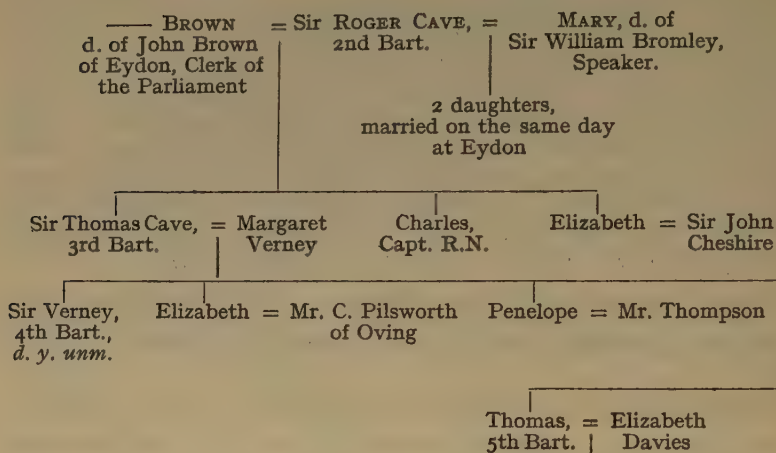
Samuel Reynolds, from Colchester, to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

"Sir,—Quarter Sessions are ordered to be held by adjournment on the 14th of June next at Chelmsford, where I have no hopes of having three Justices unlesse you would be so kind as to be there, and add to the former favours done to, Sir, your most humble servant."

When Sir Thomas was not at Westminster, he had much county business to attend to. He describes himself as "no true politician", yet his instinct for fair play forbade him to desert his party, when the utter defeat of the Tories prompted the time-servers to resort to such tricks as were used against him in the Leicester election of 1715. But though he gallantly responded to every call of duty, eventually at the cost of health and life itself, there could be no doubt where he loved to be—his was indeed

. . . a soul, whose master-bias leans
To home-felt pleasures, and to gentle scenes.

CAVES AND BRAYES OF STANFORD



Several descendants. Lord Braye now represents the Verneys, having successfully claimed the dormant barony of Braye through Margaret Verney.

CHAPTER XIV

SOLDIER FRIENDS

THE War of the Spanish Succession dragged its slow length along; it was followed with the keenest interest by the writers of the Verney Letters. There were such frequent peals of joy from the London church bells, such flaring bonfires in the streets, and such dangerous rockets, that Aunt Adams in Covent Garden cannot hear herself speaking or writing; and the short-lived welcome to Peace was soon interrupted as Marlborough's brilliant victories are reported at home, so that War becomes more popular than Peace ever was—and the bells, the bonfires, and the rockets are now to celebrate Blenheim or Ramillies or Malplaquet. The names of the allied Generals, and the towns lost and taken, are discussed in the liveliest manner by old ladies at their card parties and tea-drinkings.

The delays in receiving news from so many and such distant battlefields, the difficulties of getting recruits to supply our losses, and the sufferings of the wounded are briefly alluded to in the Letters. The individual soldier in whom they are all interested is "My Nephew, Captain Verney Lloyd".

In the happy days when Claydon and Hillesdon House were filled with large families of young cousins living in the greatest intimacy, the soldier's mother, Mary Verney, came between Cary Gardiner and Elizabeth Adams in age. After her marriage with Robert Lloyd (an apothecary working under Dr. Denton) they settled in Cheshire; Mary Lloyd died in 1684, leaving two sons, Humphrey and Verney, and two daughters, Mary and Ruth. Verney Lloyd became a keen professional soldier; Sir Ralph Verney had helped him during the early part of his career, but he was now regularly employed in Marlborough's campaigns. His high spirits and good humour made his home-comings very welcome at Stan-

ford and at Claydon. He would have been most courteous to Uncle Toby, and a favourite with Corporal Trim. Captain Verney Lloyd had the business of getting recruits and taking them out, a disagreeable task for an officer on leave. Cary Stewkley writes in January 1702:

"He is in the same post as he was, that is which is call'd Captin Livetanant, his Collonel is Webb, A favourite to the King, in Princes Ann's Redgement."

Even soldiers at home were not safe in such violent times; a sad story of a young Guardsman is told in a few lines:

23 June
1706.

Ralph Palmer, junr., to Ralph Verney

"... Sir John Cope's 3rd son was kill'd by a Kettle Drummer (about a woman), he is in Newgate. It was the first time Cope mounted the Gard at the Tower, and his Commission of Lieutenant in the Gards (which is styled Captain) cost his Father but two months ago £800 altogether."

The feeling that the profession of arms was the only one worthy of a gentleman, which the Civil War had revived from an earlier century, had died down in the society represented in these letters. Among Sir Edmund Verney's four sons, three were more or less soldiers, but in the succeeding generation the only one of his grandsons in the army was Verney Lloyd.

There were family reasons for this, besides the prevailing distrust of a standing army, as the Verneys and their related families abounded in daughters and had generally only one son. In the absence of a connection with the City, or the possession of a landed estate, which gave its owner ample occupation, the Law and Medicine offered the best financial prospects; and the Church attracted men of studious and sedentary tastes, though their social standing (short of a bishopric) left much to be desired.

Into this rather restricted county circle Mary Verney's marriage to Colonel Lovett introduced some of the gallant and brilliant Irish soldiers; and Margaret's marriage to Sir Thomas Cave gave her a brother-in-law in the Royal Navy, but his early death in the Great Storm put a stop to their further intercourse. Few sailors found their way to Claydon, which was so far from the sea. Colonel Lovett, with his enthusiasm for his lighthouse, had much to do with the profession chiefly concerned; and though Lord Fermanagh

could write that he was a stranger to Sir George Byng "as to his orders, his bravery, and himself" (when his conduct was called in question in Parliament), Colonel Lovett had a great deal of personal intercourse with him. 30 Mar.
1708.

It was not until Colonel Lovett's youngest son, Jack, grew up, that there was a distinguished naval officer in the family.

At a time when Generals and Admirals were appointed or recalled according to the fortunes of political parties at home, Admiral Byng had his share of these vicissitudes. After the storming of Gibraltar, in which he had taken a prominent part under Rooke, he was knighted by the Queen, and in 1707 and 1708 he was cruising about the Channel to protect our shores from a possible landing of the Pretender. He captured one French ship, the Salisbury; drove the rest of the fleet into Dunkirk; and narrowly escaped capturing the Queen's brother, which would have been a great embarrassment to Queen Anne and her Ministers. Sir George Byng's despatch, published at Whitehall, March 18, 1707, is preserved among the letters.

"We chased the enemy to the Northward of Buccaness, with reasonable hopes of coming up with them . . . but in the darkness of the night they all got out of sight except the Salisbury, who falling in amongst our headmost ships the Leopard entered men on board her." A list of the "French Land and Sea Officers" is enclosed, among them "Mr. de Salmon, Captain in the Regiment of Thierachie. The Ship's Company, besides the troops, consisted of 250 men, about 30 Gentlemen's servants, and 20 Little Boys. . . . We were informed by the Officers who were taken that the Pretended Prince of Wales and several other Officers and Gentlemen were on board the Mars . . . but the night coming on put an end to the engagement."

Two of the Irish soldier friends introduced by Colonel Lovett distinguished themselves in Flanders and in Spain, and both brothers, Edward and Thomas Pearce, became during the war Brigadier-Generals. Although they were in command of Irish regiments, and altogether identified with military affairs in Ireland, they were really connected with Whitlingham, Norfolk.

Edward Pearce went to school at Norwich, and in 1675, at the age of 17, was admitted Pensioner at Caius College, Cambridge, became a Scholar, and in 1680 was a Lieutenant of Sir Oliver St. George's troop. In 1685 his commission was renewed by James II. and he served in the Regiment of Horse commanded by the Earl of Ard-

glass, in Ireland. In 1689 he had joined William of Orange, became Major and Lieutenant-Colonel of a Regiment of Foot, and in 1692 M.P. for Athenry, Co. Galway. With the constitutional upheaval in Parliament and in the army, the Colonel and M.P. represented himself as much impoverished and prays for a grant "to fish for wrecks". He had married, about 1690, Frances Lovett, second daughter of Christopher Lovett, Mayor of Dublin; her elder sister, Anne, married William Tighe of Rutland, in the County of Carlow. When, in 1703, Mrs. Pearce's brother married Mary Verney, the Brigadier and his wife were intimately brought into the inner circle of Claydon relations.

Colonel Edward Pearce commanded his regiment in Spain, under Lord Peterborough, his regiment being then known as Pearce's Dragoons; he served in Valencia and at the battle of Almanza, where he was wounded. His younger and more famous brother, Thomas Pearce, also served in Spain and was a friend of Lord Ormonde's, both before and after the latter was entrusted with the government of Ireland.

Both brothers come into the Verney Letters, but it was General Edward Pearce who was most often staying at Claydon or receiving the Lovetts in London. His son, Sir Edward Lovett Pearce, began life as a soldier, and then became a distinguished architect, and was "the contriver, projector and architect of the Parliament House at Dublin." His fame had reached London, for in Mrs. Delany's *Memoirs*¹ she writes to her sister, Mrs. Anne Granville, May 27, 1731: "You must send to Captain Pearce for a Plan to build a house, and then I am sure it will be pretty and convenient." Thomas Pearce also had a soldier son, who got a commission from Lord Galway. In the Calendar of the Ormonde Papers, in the Historical MSS. Commission, there are many references to the Pearces, Edward and Thomas. In 1704 the Lords-Justice of Ireland report "As to recruiting for the Regiment commanded by Colonel Pearce".

19 July
1706.

Col. Thomas Pearce to the Duke of Ormonde

"My Lord,— . . . I have just come from Mr. Cook's, where I have been 8 days; he is a grandson of the Duke of Leeds, a well-wisher of your Grace and one that never failed a day drinking your health. I have promised to meet him on the 25th at Norwich

¹ Mrs. Delany's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 275.

Assizes, which continue about 6 days. Then with your Grace's leave, being you do not design to go to Ireland till September, I would wait on my Lord Cornwallis."

A month later, Lord Cutts writes that he has sent for the Quarter-master-General on Routes to be prepared for the marching of several regiments, including "Pearce's", to embark at Cork. The regiments are, many of them, very short of men, as "after the draft for Catalonia, it was my Lord Treasurer's opinion not to give the recruiting-money till after Harvest, so that we could not supply the deficiency of the men drafted out".

"Pearce's Regiment" is one of four to ship for Catalonia, but they did not embark till 1707.

A few months later, Colonel Thomas Pearce is back at Dublin, having been

"but 24 hours on shipboard and the good luck to escape the privateers that are in the Channel, we landed on Good Friday safe and well. I wish I could say the same of the Princess Meredith, who, poor woman, met with a very unlucky accident in the dirty lane near my Lord Sunderland's, where the forewheels of the Chariot sinking suddenly into a hole plunged her forwards and bruised her face to that degree she will hardly be fit to appear this two months; she wears a great black patch upon her nose, which causes here very odd speculations. . . . We have no news yet of the arrival of the convoy and transports at Kinsale. My recruiting officers are all come to the Regiment; the men they have brought are very good, but short of their complement." 12 Apr. 1707.

A week later, Colonel Thomas Pearce, writes to condole with Ormonde on his loss of the Government:

"which is as great an affliction to me as to the most faithful of your humble servants; what could occasion it heaven knows. . . . Those fools that were rogues enough to oppose the Queen and their own interest while your Grace was labouring for their good, seem not so much rejoiced as might be expected. . . . I must beg leave to mention what a certain Irish Bishop said upon the death of Queen Elizabeth: 'Beloved, our enemies have long waited for a day; tis now come, and the Devil do Em good with it.' " 19 Apr. 1707.

In May 1708, Thomas Pearce, now a Brigadier-General, writes from the Portuguese Camp upon Caya; and in February 1709, from Lisbon, a long and confidential letter to Lord Ormonde [now Commander-in-Chief], about the prospects of the campaign.

Both brothers fought in Spain, as there is a letter from Queen

Anne, on behalf of an officer, who had served in the Regiment of Dragoons commanded by Major-General Edward Pearce at the Battle of Almanza, 25th April 1707.

Thomas Pearce writes to Lord Ormonde from Lisbon, he does not know what sort of recruits are coming out to him:

23 Feb.
1709.

"If all new men, I fear you will have but an indifferent account of them, what men we have here now are pretty well seasoned to the country, for"—he adds grimly—"most of those that were sick are underground."

Brigadier Thomas Pearce is mentioned by Luttrell in the campaign of 1709 in Portugal, when Lord Galway was in command of the British Forces. The Portuguese troops having crossed a river to attack the Spaniards, against the advice of their English allies, were repulsed, when

"the Lord Galway commanded Pearce's Brigade by a new attack to keep the Spanish in play, which was so well performed that the Portuguese Infantry had time to retire over the river in good order, but the rescuers themselves were made prisoners; the Lord Galway, who had his horse shot under him, made his escape."¹

Major-General Thomas Pearce is then reported to be a prisoner in Spain, and later we hear of his being at home on parole.

29 Jan.
1708.

Lord F., in London, to Mary Lovett, at Dublin

"... Here's a report that Brigadier Edw. Pearce is dead & yesterday your sister was told of it, & she is so concern'd that you can't Imagine her Affliction, all her friends are labouring to find out. Major Hunt, who first told it, is lately come from Catalonia. I heartily wish it false, otherwise tis a prodigious loss to Mrs. Pearce & her Children."

This proved to be a false report; he lived till 1714.

31 May
1708.

Col. Lovett, in London, to Lord F., at Claydon

"... Cozen Tigh & I dined with my Br. Pearce & Sister yesterday. My Br. Pearce with some of his officers came to town on Saturday, he has been very ill & looks Sadly, but hope he will now live sober & then he will be well again. He has brought over from my Ld. Gallaway a Comn. for his Son to be a Capt. in his regimt., so he is well provided for."

¹ Luttrell's *Brief Relation*, vi. 422.

This son was later the Dublin architect.

Lord Fermanagh writes:

"... The Brigadier, Colonel Lovett, and Mr. Twigg came down last Sunday sennight. I heare there was great applicatn. made for the Regt. of Essex Dragoons. The Duke of M. was for Meredith, who I think succeeded. The Duchess of M. was for Sir R. T., and some say the Queen was for Hill. This goes to London by Son Lovett & Mr. Twigg—the Brigadier having had the Gout, I can't tell whether he will be able to goe with them."

30 Jan.
1709.

Brigadier Edward Pearce was happily in London in 1710, when Colonel Lovett's health failed so suddenly, just as he seemed to have attained the fruit of long years of labour, and he must have been of great comfort to the stricken family.

Two other soldiers claim the interest of the family, but they are both fighting in Flanders; they are Captain Verney Lloyd and a college friend of Ralph's, Adolphus Oughton, described as a Courtier and an Honest Man.

At the time of Queen Anne's birthday in 1704, Lady Cave was kept at home by the despotism of a young baby, or she would have been dancing with the best of them, but she had to depend on her sister Betty's reports:

"I believe the devirson of the Court appeared never the worse for want of my company. . . . Beau Oughton was there, in a red and silver wastcoat, and a dark Couleured Coate, made purposely for that occasion."

13 Feb.
1704.

It amuses Lord Fermanagh to hear of it; he had not always been tied to a gouty armchair.

"I suppose", he writes, "the Gentleman at the Three Blue Spikes was one of the Dancers, if there was a Ball as well as Opera at Court on the Birth Night."

20 Feb.
1705.

Lady Cave replies:

"There never is any Balls at Court now."

Queen Anne had grown stout, and much preferred horse races, or hunting in a light carriage in Windsor Park.

Adolphus Oughton of Tachbrook, Warwickshire, was descended from the Wenmans, who had been neighbours and friends of the former generation of Verneys, and patients of Dr. Denton's. He corresponded with Ralph Verney at Merton; and was famous for

his intimacy with persons of quality, his friendship with the Queen's Maids of Honour, and for the delicate shade of rose-red of his exquisite waistcoats.

Mr. Cheret, who did not like him, calls him a "trimmer", but the Beau appears in the war as Marlborough's Aide-de-Camp, who presents him with a pair of silver pistols, and later again as "Regimental Colonel of the Coldstream Guards", and as Sir Adolphus Oughton, Bart., and M.P. for Coventry. These glories were in the future, but his letters and those of Captain Verney Lloyd were remarkable to have been written amid the fatigues and sufferings of a campaign.

In the year of Blenheim, he seems to have had a wound, rather mysteriously described by Lord Fermanagh:

22 Oct.
1704.

"I am sorry Mr. Oughton should have a rubber with a fowling-piece, but hope the mark is out of his Mouth. My service to him, and I hope he'll have noe more such rancounters. . . ."

Mr. Oughton is going to Stanford, carrying with him a letter from Lady Fermanagh to Lady Cave:

5 June
1704.

"He will deliver you this and tell you all the occurrences of the Towne, for he is a perfect Courtier tho' an honest man."

As armies went into winter quarters and officers who had interest were allowed ample leave, it was possible to partake in the glories of the campaign of 1704 and yet to be at home for the birthday celebrations next spring. Lady Cave writes:

6 Feb.
1705.

"All the news and discourse now are about the gayety and de-virsions of this day, it being the Queen's birthday; Mr. Oughton was at Court this morning, where there was abundance of Fin'ry and great crowding; my sister is gone with Mrs. Lawley tonight to see the Play there."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

11 Feb.
1705.

"I make no doubt but Beau Oughton was there; for it had been but a thinn Court without him."

14 May
1705.

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... I hear Mr. Oughton is to have a Captain's place in the Guards, but how true the report is I know not."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

"... If Mr. Oughton hath a Captain's place in the Guards, It's a good post in times of peace, and worth £12 or 1500, and they are called Lieut.-Collonel. But of late they are soe sent abroad that I believe they are to be had Cheaper. Jerry Bird is a Lieutenant in Sir Charles Hotham's Regiment, and is now at Yorke, raising men, and but few they have got."

Lord Fermanagh to Sir T. Cave

26 May
1706.

"... Colonel Oughton has not his Commn. before the late In-gagemt. in Brabant, for he would have done somewhat very excellent, as the taking the Elecr. of Bavaria Prisoner, or at least Villeroi, but let him look to his next Campn. if Adolphus be in the field.

Granny is ready to tinckle us to the steeple house, so that I must Seale this up."

Sir T. Cave, at Park Place, to Lord Fermanagh

19 Oct.
1706.

"... Collonel Oughton, Whom att Claydon we supposed marry'd has saluted us already, and I can't discover any Symptoms of Matrimony otherwise than to his Commission. I hear there was a small appearance at Newmarket, of which 'tis said the Queen took notice that the Gentry did not meet Her Majesty, which makes me thinke few but Whigs were there."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

"It's well for the Collonel that he is not marry'd to one of so small a fortune, because after the next Campaine he'll deserve one of a thousand a yeare . . . it's well you met with no bad company, our neighbour, Mr. Minshull, was eased of the burden of 50 Guineas but they returned him four to bear his Charges. They told him he won at Newmarket and wisht him good Luck again, he was in his Charrett. The Sparks were very Civill to him, barr the takeing of his money."

19 Oct.
1706.

Sir T. Cave to Lord Fermanagh

28 Nov.
1706.

"... The D. of Marl. is going to Blenheim House; it was discour'd he was preparing to reimbarke for Holland for concluding the Peace; against which Coll. Oughton prays incessantly, and makes a vigorous preparation to fight the French. This place fills with the Members of both Houses, I wish't emptyor by me, injoying but very indifferently."

Colonel Adolphus Oughton dined at Claydon in April 1707, on his way to London and Paris.

19 July
1707.

Mrs. Adams to Lord F.

"... Last week wee had a leter from my Nephew Verney Lloyd, who is very well but saies he has not hard from any of his friends this three months. He desines for Ingland the beginning of November."

11 Sept.
1707.

"... We had a leter from My Nephew Lloyd out of Flanders, he is well in health, but is still trouble with his defness, that hee tooock two yeares agoo, with lying in a wet pair of sheetes in a dicke in Flanders, bot he hops to get rid of it the winter in Ingland and in the meantime his humble servis atends all his friends at Claydon."

Sir Thomas Cave writes to Lord Fermanagh:

24 Nov.
1707.

"... Since the French so much infest the Herring Pool, tis mercy Coll. Oughton came not over this Winter, your Lordship's wishing Coll. Churchill's Aunt had supplied his place reminds me of a flying report in the Country that the said Lady was committed to the Tower, but can't find on what grounds this was raised.

The Apples with the black Boar and Sow came safe. I have also two of the Wild Tangier breed, that we are now severally Swinish. Our Company left us on Saturday, we shall now spend the Winter alone and Dull, except your Lordship has mercy upon us and come over with my Lady to spend the Christmas at Stanford, where you would be heartily welcomed."

12 Apr.
1708.

Lord Fermanagh to Sir T. Cave

"... I had a letter from Col. Oughton dated at Tinmouth Castle."

Lady Cave replies:

19 Apr.
1708.

"... Sir Thomas is glad to hear Col. Oughton is in the land of the living, which had it not bin for your letter he might justly have suspected, having heard not a word from him since he left England, and the reason of his Silence and mighty Strangeness, where there was such Intimacy, is surprising as well as unknown."

12 June
1708.

Sir T. Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... I must confess that after the leaving so much good Company we are at a loss how to dispose of Ourselves between rising and going to bed."

24 July
1708.

"... I receiv'd one from Col. Oughton by the same post as yours, giving an account of the Battle, and withal expressing his resentment of my not writing to him in all this time; I take this as

a Hint from some friend to both of us not supposing the Coll. Ignorant of the true Reason, which however, I have plainly demonstrated to him by this day's post."

"... We have had my Mother and two Sisters lately at Stan-
ford from Eyden; I thinke my Mother has very well wore off her
grief." 16 Aug.
1708.

"... I receiv'd a second favour from Coll. Oughton, who enters
great assurance of taking Lisle and rebating the French, and
may God grant Em his Assistance." 2 Sept.
1708.

"... Lutterworth Race drawing nigh, I thought to acquaint
you with my chance there, which prov'd beyond my expectations
by winning the Silver Tankard and immediately selling my horse.
... Yesterday my son Verney, was invested with Coat and
Breeches, in which he looks very pretty and has many pleasant
aires. My little girl is very brisk and well, but goes not perfectly
Alone. 18 Oct.
1708.

I have heard from Colonel Oughton at Menin, who was wounded
by a ball in the bending of the arm and came out at the Elbow; he
sayes the Surgeons giving hopes of the use of it again to dance
right hand and lift. We have now a frequent correspondence."

Col. Adolphus Oughton to Ralph Verney

20 Nov.
1708.

"Dear Sir,—Nothing but my ignorance how to address to you,
could thus long have prevented my saluting you with my heartiest
congratulations, and sincerest wishes for your wellfare and happy-
ness upon your entering into the Holy State. Sir Tho. Cave was
so kind to inform me lately by letter (pursuant to my frequent
desires) how I might commence this correspondence with you; he
at the same time acquainted me that I had a double occasion of
wishing you joy, the first upon the certainty of your haveing a fine
lady for your Spouse, and the 2d. upon the pregnant hopes (in
consequence of that) of your haveing shortly a fine Boy for your
Son and Heir; both these articles made his letter extreemly accept-
able to me, as I doe not doubt but the following accounts will make
mine to you.

The French haveing some time since (by occupying all the Ports
upon the Scheld) cut off our communication with Brussels and
Holland, and by that means reduced us to some straits for want
both of Ammunition and Provisions; my Ld. Duke to prevent the
continuance and encrease of this inconvenience, resolv'd., cost
what it would, to reforce a passage over that River; in pursuance
of this determination four days since he marchd., with incredible
expedition thither, and haveing caused severall Bridges of Boats

to be laid in the night, at break of day passd. over with the whole Army in the very Face of the Ennemy, who had double and triple entrenchments before them on the other side, all of which however upon our 1st. attack they most shamefully and ignominiously abandoned, leaving the Tents of five intire Regiments standing, togeather with a great quantity of ammunitiion and Bagage, and about fiveteen hundred of their number killd. or prisoners.

Immediately after this success his Grace marched directly to the relief of Brussells, which the Elector of Bavaria had close besieged some days before, but upon our approach thought fit to raise the siege and retire, and that with such precipitation too, that he was oblig'd to leave his Cannon and morters, and a great part of his ammunitiion and Bagage behind him, as a prey to the victorious Garrison, which sallyed out with such Fury upon his Rear that they made Shift to take and destory about three thousand of 'em.

Both my Paper and Time would fail me should I attempt to innumerate all the dayly advantages we obtain over our Ennemys this long glorious Campaigne. I hope to give you a particular account of all by word of mouth, when I have the honour to kiss your hands in Brittain, when that happy time will be I cannot yet precisely determine, I being willing to defer my Voyage thither till I could have the convenience of coming with our General, who at present seems to have forgott all thoughts of his native Country, and is still pursuing his Conquests this Cold Weather with as much warmth and Heat as if it was Mid Summer, and hunting for Laurels at a Season of the yeare one would think very improper for gathering Greens.

I will not close all this good news with the mellancholy relation of my own private misfortunes in haveing been very severely wounded, presumeing you may some way or other have heard the particulars of that affair from other hands; it sufficeth to tell you that it is this day just three months since I began, by woefull experience, to be made sensible how agreably one may pass one's time midst Racks and Tortures, my long acquaintance with which has made Pains and Sufferings so familiar to me that, was I as well qualified in all other respects as in my disregard of them, I should never be in better condition than at present, to suffer Martyrdome.

I shall now conclude this long letter with desireing you to communicate my kindest remembrances and service to the Claydon family, and all Friends as occasion shall offer; and in a more particular manner I beg the favour of you though unknown to make the same acceptable to your Lady, of whom and of your self I am, Dear Sir, a most obedient humble servt. A. OUGHTON.

P.S. I had like to have forgot to tell you that we expect to be masters of the Cittadelle of Lille in less than a week."

There is a report of Colonel Oughton's death; this is contradicted, but he has been severely wounded in both arms. He is at home in March 1709, but talks much of going over again to Headquarters in May. So the Beau could fight and suffer and had no thought of shirking his duty, any more than the smart guardsman of to-day. Early in May, Sir Thomas Cave writes from London:

"This place begins to empty, and the Duke of Marlborough, with his Retinue of Officers, will still drain it. They continue to talk of peace, unavoidable, by the great inclination the Dutch showed thereunto. Colonel Oughton is not yet gone and desires his Service to all Claydon friends. I perceive it is a false report of his numerous equipage, he confessing to me, the loss of five horses and he had but six during the campaign. He looks as well as ever, except the loss of the Joynt upwards, the Communication bone of the Elbow, being shattered in pieces." 3 May 1709.

A later account reports that:

"Colonel Oughton has returned to the Camp, to Flanders, to try another brush with Monsieur. It is supposed, he will have no use off Either Arme in his former Generous Employe, the Dutch Envoye declares that the preliminaries of a Peace are certainly settled." 19 May 1709.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord F.

"... I hard last night from Stanford and all the good Company ther is well, but Captain Lloyd is much trobled with a sore Eye that puts him to more pain than ever love did; for I am now more confirmeid in the Opinion I ever was of, that he had more wit than ever to mary without sum great advanteg to him that in reason can expect. Whot causeid the report of him was out of meer charity he shoeid to a poor Widdow and her Daur., and for none ill ways at all." 29 Nov. 1709.

The Hon. Elizabeth Verney to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

"I receved my deare Brors. kind letter and take the Opportunity of this cover to return my sincere thankes and inform you of this family's welfare. Sister Lovett is almost out of the straw and I believe will quickly think of moving towards London, where I hope we shall all have a happy meeting before tis Long. Brigadeer Pearce came down three weeks agoe to Christen the Child; and has ever since been confin'd with the Gout, but now hee is soe well that I beleve we shall lose him tomorrow, however we have got the Jolly Captain [Verney Lloyd] in his room who is your humble servant as is every member of this society." 9 Feb. 1710.

Captain Verney Lloyd was staying at Claydon in February 1710, during his last furlough, in company with Colonel Lovett, and the death of the latter so soon after is a great shock to him abroad.

29 July
1710.

*Captain Verney Lloyd, at the Grand Camp, Villar Bruline, to
Ralph Verney, at Baddow*

"Noething but the knowledge of my Deare Cousin's thorow goodness Incourage me to write now after soe long silence, that and my desertion from Covent Garden putts me horribly in confusion when I think on it. That damn'd thing call'd Honour was the occasion of my scouring away soe sudenly. I arrived att Ghent the 3 of Aprill, which day the whole Garrison march'd out immediately, after our passing the Lines our Regement was ordard to the Siege of Doway, wher we had considerable losses, but your humble servt. narrowly escap'd being blown up—I doe with all my harte wish you all joy of my new She-Relation, and that you may increse both male and females to your owne satisfaction and of all that are well-wishers to Claydon. We have little or noe newes in these partes, but what is disagreeable to all that wish peace. The confederats still persist in thar owne way of making us knock our heads against stone walls. The Siege of Bethune goes on with great viguour, it is hoped we shall be masters of that place in 16 dayes time, when we shall (its believ'd) undertake Ayre, a small tho' a strong fortification which may very well near end the Campaine, and if possible will see old England once more. Most people beleive here (especially they of Bp. Hoadley's party) the reason the Peace is broke off is occasioned by some change in the Ministry, and likewise they are very doubtfull of a New Parlimt., our Court has been very Chagreined some time past. I say very little and think the rest. Your neighbour Captain Lloyd has gott a Compny. in a Scotch Regmt. in the Dutch Service. He like a happy man has gott his wife and little girle in the Camp with him. I pd. them a visitt yesterday, in the afternoone, found the good Capn. and his wife att dinner, but in mourning for their Landresse, sheseemed mightily confused to finde them in such a pickle, however his Lady soone put on best harnesse, and sent away the dirty bratt. We dranke all your good healths, and desired thare humble service to you all in generall. It was by chance that I heard of poore Collonell Lovett's death, which surprised me much, I heare my poore Cousin is gon for Ireland, I believe the difficulties he met with about the Act passing, was instrumental to his hard fate; which we must all submit to whenever ther is a call.

We had a flying report of a dissent near Montpelea [Montpelier]; and since that we are told you were obliged to goe in boarded,

seldom any of these dessents takes effect. You'l be extreemly obligeing to me if you'l be so good as to seal my pardon and what news you can picke up. I beg my humble service to Mr. Pascoll, your Lady, Mrs. Pascoll and Madame Bell. I heard sometime agoe the Lady Eliza was att Baddow. If she be with you still with my humble service pray let her know that I'me ready to doe what penance she will be pleased to inflict on me, for not waiting on her att Chelsea, and likewise let her know that poor Col. Caldwell is dead of a wound he received in his shoulder before Doway; when I saw Col. Oughton last he inquired after you and desired service to you all, if you please to favour me with a line direct for me in Majr.-Genll. Primerose's Regimt., in the Grand Camp, Flanders. I am, with all respect, Deare Sir, Your most obedt. humble servant,
VERNEY LLOYD.

P.S. My Humbl. Service to Mr. John Pascoll and honest Beau Johnson."

*Captain Verney Lloyd, from Courtray, to Ralph Verney,
at Baddow*

24 Dec.
1710.

"Dear Sir,—I had the favour of yours which was a great satisfaction to me, to finde your Lady was soe well as to make Visetts the latter part of the season. I cant but owne I was in mighty paine for her when I heard the smallpox had reached Baddow, but am in hopes all is over. The account you sent me of the Bucks Election was most pleasing to me, I hope my Ld. may live many yeares to serve the Queen and convince his Countrey of the abominable choice they have for some Parlements last past sent up to represent them. Monarchy was almost out of doores, and the Spiritt of a commonwelth swell's those fanaticall rascalls to such a height that they had almost forgott there was a person as the Queen in being, or a Church to be supported. Now the people of England's Eyes are opned, I hope they will have a True regard how they shut them againe. Pray what says Beau Johnson, is he weathercocke-like, or has Lady Fitzwalter that ascendancy over him to oblige the Beau to continue *Semper Idem*. The Queen laying aside some of our Genlls. has been very pleasing to us, and Espetially to our Eight Regiments that lye att Courtray, in short we are bought and sold like Beasts in Smithfield. I hope Mr. Cadogan will mett with his True reward for that as well as other misdeamenours. Had I knowne this dull place had been our Quarters no thing should have prevented my kissing your hands att Baddow. Our Major-Generall gott me in a good humour and prevail'd with me to take the Command of his Regiment upon me this winter. You would be wonderfull Kinde in letting me knowe what's doing in your part of the world. The last action of Spain hath quite sunke our spirrits,

which I'me afraid will alter the Parliament's design in persuing the War in Spain; the Course that hath been taken with us some years past. A lease of an Officer's or Solder's life from May Day is deare att two months Purchase, and this Epistle of mine will be with you if the weather permitts to wish you all att Baddow a happy New Yeare and many of them. My humble service waits upon your Lady, Mr. Pascall, Mrs. Pascall [Mary P.], Cousen Adams, not forgetting the Butter Paper, I am with all respects, dear Sir, Your affectionate Kinsman and obedt. Humbl. servt.
VERNEY LLOYD.

P.S. Be pleasd to direct for me att Courtray Flanders."

15 May
1712.

Lady Fermanagh regrets that the Captain "Dos not order his affares" to her husband's liking; "I really wish him well for I think him a good-natured man, and it may be if there is a peace he may think his going over unnecessary."

There was a report that Verney Lloyd was courting a Miss Gery, which for some reason was not favoured by Lord Fermanagh, but we come upon him and his wife later, in the family gatherings at Stanford.

18 May
1712.

Lady Fermanagh to Lord F.

"... I sopes the Capt. and Coll. Oughton goes to gather as design'd, if they stay Longer I shoud think that they might as well not goe att all, for it is late in the Season."

27 May
1712.

Sir T. Cave, at Westminster, to Lord F., at Claydon

"... The Whigs have raised a report that the Duke of Ormond, Pr. Eugene, and other Generalls, were preparing to attack the French at a great advantage, but that Sir Tho. Hanmer gave the Duke a command from the Queen to act only defensively, at which they say Duke Marlborough wod sooner have layd down the Commission, which I send you as their Cant and not truth."

9 June
1712.

"... I have this day heard from Verney Lloyd . . . he says the Dutch are stark mad, and I'm sure We have always been soe to be guided by them. They give us threats here, of the thing (called Peace) being speedily concluded."

12 June
1712.

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

"I have received a letter from Verney Lloyd who was well at Courtray, and in no danger of the Enemy, but he saith the Dutch are very angry with us, and have printed what Hambden spoke in the House in Dutch & French."

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney

26 Dec.
1710.

"We are, I fear, irrecoverably ruined in Spain."

*Maj.-Gen. Edward Pearce, in Dublin, to Lord Fermanagh,
at Claydon*

26 Dec.
1710.

"My Lord,—I beg the favour of you to give the enclosed to my Sister Lovett, with my humble service to your Lady. I hope soon to see you & to tell your Lordship how much I am your obedient servant,
E. PEARCE."

A soldier friend reminds us:

"The places mentioned in these 18th century letters—Menin, Lille, Douai, Bethune, Aire, Courtrai, and others are familiar names to the soldiers of the present generation, for each was again a battlefield in the Great War."

Lord Fermanagh writes to Captain Butler of the *Dunkirk* man-of-war on behalf of his steward's son, Ned Challoner:

"It is needless to ask you to be kind to him during the Voyage. Captain Butler is too much of a gentleman to be otherwise—but what I entreat of you is to prefer him to some higher post as opportunity offers." 17 Apr.
1711.

Lord Fermanagh writes to Ralph Verney:

"... I have Endeavour'd to gett Verney Lloyd to be a Lieut-Coll. but find its not to be obtain'd. Gen. Webb told me he had asked the Duke of Ormond for one, and promising to ask for no more, the Duke promist him."

Sir Thomas Cave writes:

"Maj. Gen. Pearce call'd here in his way from London, and to Ireland; my wife dined abroad that day, and my Kinsman only dined with me, and went for Coventry that night; he came down in a new Whim of a Chariott and a pair of horses." 13 Aug.
1711.

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney

29 Dec.
1711.

"... They talk of 8 new Lords to be made. Mr. St. John to be Earl of Bullingbroke; Mr. Granville, Earl of Bath; Mr. Bathurst, Sir Richard Child, Sir Thomas Willoughby, Mr. Pit of Hampshire, and some others.

Col. Nicholson is arrived here and they say has brought back his

four thousand men, from the expedition to Quebec, which were thought to have been lost, safe to his Country again."

19 Apr.
1712.

Margaret Adams to Lord Fermanagh

"... The Captain [Verney Lloyd] is not yet gon but expects his Pass out this day. I hope there will be no dout of his safe return this Campagne, which I believe will not be unpleasing to any of his friends and the Addition of A Collonell to it is sincerely wisht."

27 Dec.
1712.

There is a letter to Lord Fermanagh at the end of the year from Major-General Edward Pearce, much troubled by "My Cos. Pickett's illness, which my stay has been longer in Dublin than I intended by meeting some disappointment in my affairs."

On the 10th June 1714, Lord Fermanagh writes to his son:

"Maj. Genl. Pearce is dead at Bath, comeing from Irelt."

The following from New York is apparently from a Claydon man in the Royal Navy:

13 Dec.
1712.

Thomas Brome, from New York, Dec. 13, 1712, to Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon—recd. Apr. 15, 1713

"May it please your Lordship. After landen our men att Dunkerk we prosd. on our voige to New York, ware by the way we Inged [engaged] a ship, but after some resistance we took her in to Fyal [Fingal] ware I had the misfortune to put my elbow out of Joint, my Capn. having made me Coxon of our Long Bote, in wich I underwent a great Dele of hardship, and live in hopes of seeing your Lordship in the Spring if our Ship comes home. I have no nues to send your Lordship but that I fouend my Sister here. Pray my most humble duty to my Lady & humbl. sarvis to all friends. I remaine, Your Lordship's most obedient sarvant, as in duty Bound. THO. BROME.

P.S. Jack Green is on Bord but dus not like the Sea."

During the Tory domination in the last months of Queen Anne's life, Sir Thomas Cave writes:

17 Mar.
1714.

"I din'd this day with Coll. Oughton by invitation, where was also Dr. Chamberlayn and Beau Symms. We had good wine and plenty of Whigg-healths, which I cross'd with Tory ones; their's 16 Whigg Collonells ordered to sell out of the Gards and others, among which is Collonell Oughton—that now the Game begins."

When peace and a Tory ministry had put an end to his military career, a misfortune he shared with General Webb (Verney Lloyd's

distinguished commander), Oughton continued to court the rich and the great, and in June Sir Thomas Cave writes:

" . . . Tis said Lady Baggott has given Coll. Oughton all her personall Estate, £5000 in money, and a Lease of 25 years of her Paternall Estate; which last will probably be attended with a long Suit at Law, in search of her power to make that grant. When Radclif came out from her Ladysp. he told the Coll. he hop't my Lady had settled her affairs, which presage of the Death occasioned a momentary Exit in the Collonell, and I cannot wonder at his transport of Grief on such a valuable Loss, for I much doubt, of his succeeding so richly in his next amorous Campain; especially since his colours of vesture are not of so rubicond a Dye, of which the Ladys are most fond, as resembling their blushes."

7 June
1714.

"The Colours of which the Ladys are so fond", recalls a picturesque story told of Queen Elizabeth, who, when Raleigh had poured the rich spoils of Spain at her feet, retaining for himself a waistcoat of rose-red, the Queen took such a fancy to the colour that he had to give up that too, at Her Majesty's desire. Adolphus Oughton, in the heavy mourning of the day, would lose much of his decorative effect at St. James's, but this lamented eclipse did not last long.

Sir T. Cave to Ralph Verney

26 July
1714.

" . . . I hear Coll. Oughton is soon expected in Warwickshire; he is much thretnd by the executrs of Sir Edmund Bagott, whereby the Lawyers can't lose, & 'twould be kind if we could procure Uncle Palmer some practice therein, for he is forc't to turn News-monger as you'll see by an Examiner, of which he was adjudg'd author at Leicester Assizes on Friday last."

When Mary Lovett, as a widow, was attending one of the first Courts of the new Sovereign, she met her old friend "as fine as a King", and quite as much at home with the Hanoverian Royalties as he had been at the Court of Good Queen Anne. In 1718 he was asked to be proxy for the Duke of York on his instalment as Knight of the Garter at Windsor. It was an office that suited this fine gentleman exactly, and he was created a Baronet for these congenial services.

Margaret Adams to Lord F.

6 Nov.
1714.

" . . . Having this week seen both the King, Prince, and Princess, in their Dayly walk every fine day round St. James's Park, I think

myselfe much better Quallyfied to converse with Quallity, besides I had a Bow from Collonell Oughton, who followed the Prince, which does not a little exalt me, notwithstanding which the pleasant letter I recd. from your Lordsp. gave me more satisfaction. . . . My Mother sent yesterday for some wine to drink your healths, and tho' she can't now write is ever desirous to hear from Claydon. I beg you to let my Lady Fermanagh know her peticote shall be clean'd. I was this day to see Cousen Boate by whom I heard that Cos. Denton was made either Attorney or Solicitor Genll. to the Prince, & La. Denton has took a house in Charles Street by St. James's. But I don't heare that Mr. Boate has yet got any Place. Captain Lloyd and his wife have been to see her mother, soe that breach I hope is perfectly made up; we were last Monday at Cos. Vickers', where all the Westminster relations mett us, and according to custom [Lord Fermanagh's birthday] we were very kindly entertained."

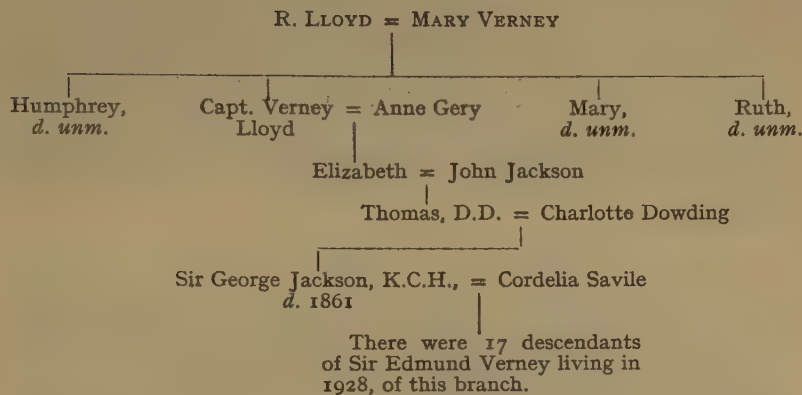
12 Apr.
1716.

Sir Thomas Cave writes in the spring of 1716: "Tis said Collonell Oughton is on Marrying Mrs. Lepell, present Maid of Honour; he is reckon'd the Compleatest Courtier of this time." Mrs. Lepell was not, however, called to fill this arduous office.

All the match-makers of the family were used to gossip about "the jolly Captain", and when eventually Captain Verney Lloyd married, there was a chorus of disapproval, it seemed to upset some cherished hopes which it would be indiscreet to speculate upon. His mother died in 1684, and a tablet on the south wall of Chester Cathedral is erected to her memory. Her husband, Robert Lloyd, survived till 1709; his eldest son, Humphrey, had also died, and it was highly desirable that Verney Lloyd should marry if the family was not to become extinct. His wife, Anne Gery, had an eminently reputable descent from her great-grandfather, Sanderson, Bishop of Lincoln and Chaplain to Charles I., his son, Dr. William Gery, a Prebendary of Lincoln, who had recently died, leaving a monument in Islington Church. His widow, Elizabeth, was the daughter of Dr. William Cave, Canon of Windsor and Chaplain to Charles II. This lady was able to leave a comfortable fortune to her only daughter, Anne. The Verney Lloyds again had an only daughter, Elizabeth, whose son, Dr. Thomas Jackson, Canon of St. Paul's, became Chaplain to George III., quite after the precedents of the Gery family. Dr. Jackson's son, Sir George Jackson, did good work in diplomacy, while very young, and crowned his services to the country by taking several difficult posts in connection with the abolition of the Slave Trade in Sierra

Leone and in other places. In 1928 there were said to be seventeen living descendants of the marriage of Anne Gery and Verney Lloyd, whom Sir Edmund Verney would have been proud to claim.

LLOYDS OF CHESTER



CHAPTER XV

HOME INTERESTS

THE year 1710, which was to bring so grievous a loss to the family in Colonel Lovett's death in April, opens with the small details of country life.

7 Jan.
1710.

Daniel Baker to Ralph Verney

"... Peas never bore such a price as they doe now for a great many yeares; and also all other grain rises with us; especially Barley and Wheat, notwithstanding the late Act of Parliamt. which was made on the poor's behalf; for wheat with us is 12s. 6d. a bushell, I mean old Wheat, and Barley is 35s. per qr., soe tis very hard with poor people and they are ready to famish, & so many Sessions have been harping upon it, I marvell no Act passes about erecting workhouses; or for the better employing soe many hands for the good of the Kingdom. Otherwise the nation must sink under the burthens & the Parishes will hardly be able to keep 'Em. In some places near us tis 4 shillings in the pound already as to their Rates. Not that God forbid I should speak this out of Envy, but I believe expedients might be found out for the Easing of one and the other. I do hope Sir you will excuse this tedious digression which must partly help to fill up a letter, for otherwise wee have little or no news in the country. We are only awaiting to hear Dr. Sacheverell's fate, and I am informed of abundance of Articles they have against him, and the House I perceive is extreamly incens'd; insomuch that my Lord Mayor thought it prudence to get his neck out of the collar though all most all people and parties in town do reckon the Doctor is left in the Lurch."

3 Jan.
1710.

Thomas Carter, Esqre., "of Weston, in Co. Oxon", writes to inform Lord Fermanagh that a silver salt-cellar has been offered to be sold to him "by one Henry Hicks who lives now at Stone, by Aylesbury, who sayes he had got the Salt of one Tho. Hughes a Butchor, in part of a debt he owed him". The salt-cellar, that had had so many owners, had the Verney and Abell arms.

Lord Fermanagh replies that it must belong to his elder brother's widow, and that he had sent his steward with the letter to her house. "Shee being a Lunatick is committed to the Guardinshipp of Mr. Abell, and there being little Correspondence between him and me I know not what she will do with it."

14 Jan.
1710.

Margaret and Sir Thomas Cave were returning home after a visit to Claydon, taking Peg Adams back with them. The journey, as described by the latter, would have been a subject for Jane Austen: the fainting lady, "wet and trembling", supported by her coachman over a little plank across a river; but even her boldest heroines were seldom allowed to face such hazardous enterprises, and would not they have been too proper to have worn his Lordship's "old hatt" under any conditions?

Margaret Adams, at Stanford, to Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon

26 Feb.
1710.

"My Lord,—Since fortune has thrown in my way so Lucky an opportunity of returning thanks for the obliging civillitys I recd. from your Ldship. & my Lady at Claydon, I should think my selfe very ungratefull did I not lay hold of it; & therfore hope for a pardon for the troubles it gives since its only errand is to pay the thanks which are so Justly due from me; the favour your Ldship. did me in lending the Old Hatt I must not forgett, it being of great use to me all along the Journey, for tho the weather was fair at our first setting out, yet by that time we came to Brackley it sett in for Rain, & continued so till we met the Chariot, which was gott the better halfe of the way, & had come through if my Lady had not met it, & I can't but wish for her Sake it had, because the continuall Rain which fell that day had so much swell'd the waters in all places that they were often through the bottom of the Coach amongst us, & at last when we got so near home as Coton the waters were out to the degree that no passage could be for us any way in the Coach; & my Lady's Horse being gon on before, she had no way to take but over a little Plank Cross the River, in all that dismall Rain, & the ground so slippery that she could not stand, & being faint & trembling with her Journey fell down, so that had not the Coachman supported her she could never have got over, & then he was forst to carry her over another water, after which we were to shift for our selves through dirt & Rain to a poor house that stod in sight & showed itselfe by the light of a Candle in it, to which we made our way the best we could & got over a hedge to it, & very glad of any shelter; but then the poor Coach & Horses we know not what was become of them nor the men with them, & in great consarn for their safety. At last a servant came to my Lady with my

poor blind steed, & told her the Coach by the help of severall very kind neighbours who had forced a way for it, tho with hasad, through their yards & grounds, was now got to the towns end, & waited for my Lady to ride to it because it could not come to her; which she was very ready to doe, fearing the Horses would be kill'd with standing in the water after so bad a Journey; & soe mounted immediatly without any great Coate to shelter her from the Rain or anything about neck or hands, having been before forced to pull them off, they were so wett; & on she rid to meet the Coach, which in that time was getting round to meet her, & so she mist of it, & not knowing where it was resolv'd to Ride it home, which she did, so Equipt as I before said: & we who were waiting in that poor Hous for the return of the Horses were as much surprised to see the Chariot come to us without my Lady in it, who we fear'd had come by some accident; however we were soon informed by one she sent back to Sir Thomas, that her Ladp. was gon home & then we Joyfully followed, but twas near ten at night befor we all met together; where we could not forbear laughing at all our adventures, & heartily rejoyced that all now was Safe. I hope my Lady has got but a moderate cold with it; tho at present I cant so well Judge of it, the fatiegue being not worn off by any of us; I beg your Lordps. pardon for this tedious account, but I could not forbear saying something of our adventures, tho the full relation I'me sure could not be put into a sheet of paper, but this I have writ will I fear be tiresom to read, so I will add no more but the repetition of my thanks, who am Your Ldships. most Humbl. Servant to Commnd.,

MARGT. ADAMS."

26 Feb.
1710.

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney at Baddow

"Dear Sir,—Tho' the Weather seem'd to favour our Setting out from Claydon, yet the Delusion of the Skies plainly appear'd to Us on this Side Monk's house, when it began to drop, and Seriously rain at Stein, but our Chariot met Us at the Mag Pye, the best halfway, that We did not spend much time in the wett and by crowding in there & coming a tolerable pace We were very warm, and doubtless had reach't home early, had not the Waters at Coton been unpassable in the usuall fordes, that We were an hour in gettin a (bad) passage, during which time We lodg'd our Selves in a little Ale house, till the Coach cou'd come Up. I fear my Wife has taken a little cold, tho' not what might be Expected from those last Wat'ry Difficulties. By Mr. Challoner of Steeple Claydon, who came hither last night to fetch away his Daughter, We perceive You left Claydon on Fryday, and fear you had full as bad travelling, it being here a very rainy morning. We heartily wish you take no Cold from itt, which with an happy minuit to my Sister will be acceptable News to, Dr. Sir, Yrs. Affectionately,

T. CAVE."



W^M CRESWELL Druggest
*at the Blew Lyon in Newgate =
Street, Sells all Sorts of Druggs,
with Coffee, Tea Chocolatt,
Cocoa=Nutts, Sago, Salop
German=Span=water, and
Snuff of all Sorts.
at Reasonable Rates*

Chas. Chaloner to Ralph Verney

"... Here came a madd Dogg and gott into the Park and bitt the Great Dogg and came into the house and bitt severall other doggs about the house. The Great Dogg hath been very badd, but I hope is something better again, he is kept Chain'd up; all the doggs have been blouDED and I hope that will help them."

21 Nov.
1717.

A valued friend remarked, after reading this chapter, "For mustard in the salad, add this recipe to unmadden a madd Dogg."

"The doggs have been dun with black Soape and brandy according to your honour's order and the great Dogg in the Park is much better, I hope it will cuer the rest of 'em."

31 Nov.
1717.

"The greate Dog in the Park went mad yesterday notwithstanding our dressing his eares with black soap and Lathering it in with brandy, that he was forst to be shoot, which I am sorry for, because he was a very good dog for the park; I believe he was bit twice, because there was two mad dogs in the park."

3 Dec.
1717.

A new great dog would cost 20 shillings; he is not to lie for some time where the old one lay, but another dog "hath eaten some of the mad dog's liver" and promptly went mad himself and bit two more little dogs, and so the plague went on.

9 Dec.
1717.

The "Great Dogg" in a deer park was a formidable person to tackle. This one's successor devoured a spaniel left by the school-boys at Claydon. The men had bravely applied the remedies (not a pleasant task to dress a mad dog's ears), but as in the case of a contemporary,

"The Dog it was that died."

The next year, Lord Fermanagh still feared that some of the dogs might go mad, and wished them all to be dressed as before, with brandy and soap.

Lord F., in London, to Mr. Chaloner

[There is some money to be paid to a Mr. Balder, at Mr. Robert Churchill's, who is a mason and lives near the Horse Ferry in Westminster.] "If I don't come home by St. Thomas' Day you must consult my wife, and give the same money to every one in the Alms Houses as you did last year, and dispose of the beef much after the same manner. . . . I am, your Lo. Friend, FERMANAGH."

16 Dec.
1718.

Lord Fermanagh and his wife have been staying with Uncle

Palmer at Little Chelsea, in December, coming to Claydon for Christmas; the Dowager Lady Fermanagh is at Penn.

In February, Ralph has returned to his duties at Westminster.

3 Feb.
1719.

Lady Fermanagh, at Claydon, to Lord F., in London

"... The quantity of Civill oringes makes six gallons of wine which is all I wood doe, because of the sugar; I wisht you might get Nancy Isted for us that you spake of some time ago. We have had such a deal of wet the country is all in a swim, I am sadly afraid of the floods, when you come pray take great care. The gardener intends to plant one Necktrin tree upon the South Wall in the goosbury garden and the other upon the South Wall of the best garden as you goe up the steps in the corner beyond the ston galery, he sayd ther is room for a very large vine to run over it and it is a very warm place. I see the Dogg from Winslow, he came along with the post; he is a vast one, but he has a vast deal of white about him, I fear it would show him too much in the night."

In spite of the elaborate marriage settlements, Lord Fermanagh is still expecting payments from the Palmers and the Lawleys. There are also unsettled debts on Lady Fermanagh's fortune, about which her husband is corresponding with "Brother Baker". In June 1710, Mrs Baker is ill at Penn, and Lady Fermanagh, who is with her, is most anxious not to give

23 June
1710.

"my Mother a disturbance on her sick bed, but I told her you would not lessen her income while she lived. Pray give my service to Cousin Lloyd and a kiss to my deare Bess; my Mother sends her service, and so do all the family, but none more at your Command than, Deare Jewell, Your Affectionate Wife."

29 June
1710.

"My Deare,—Yesterday I told my brother about my Father's Will, and it gave him so great a disturbance that the gentilman never spoke a word to me afterwards till night, but today finding I took him in his own way he is the same as he was before and don't seem out of humour at all. . . . He thought £2,500 lay at stake, I have talk'd to my mother since, and she knows what I design to propose. . . . My poor mother is extream fond of me and I could not persuade her to lett me come home till Monday, so she begs me to tell you she shall be hartily glad to see you and she don't know whether ever she may again, soe she desires you to come in the Coach on Saturday to fetch me, and I will go with you back a Monday. I would write more but I am persuaded you will come since my mother has set her mind to it. I hear that my Brother Luttrell has bought my Lord Salisbury's house at Chelsea. Mr. Cheshire has another Hitt for it in getting more money by wives. I am glad

poore Mrs. Lovett is gott safe so far of her Journey, & I hope she is before this time long safe in Ireland & that little Verney Lovett is well. Pray give my service to Cousin Lloyd & a kiss to my little Bess.—I am, Deare Heart, yours for ever."

Lord Fermanagh, at Penn, to Ralph Verney

10 Aug.
1710.

"Madam Baker was buried this day. We have three gold rings, one for you, and another for your wife, and the third for Betty Verney. I think you will doe well to write a Letter of Condolence to Bror. Baker. Our services to you all and God bless you. The Pall-Bearers were Ld. Cheney, the High Sheriff Hampden, Cross, Price, Hill, Gold." (The two others were probably Daniel Baker and Lord Fermanagh.)

The letters show how anxious Lady Fermanagh was that there should be no break in the happy relations between her husband and her own family. She was ready to give up some of the money due to her under her father's will, if her brother would agree to a compromise; but if Mr. Daniel Baker threatened to go to law, then Lord Fermanagh could be equally stiff and demand the uttermost farthing. That so sad a breach was prevented is shown by the great cordiality of all her son's letters after Mrs. Baker's death.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

18 July
1710.

"... Lady Draper has latly bin in towne, and had made A great flutter with her six horsis, and her grandson in his Wedding Cloths, all with gold Lasis, but his Lady was only in second mourning, and the Ladies here made it their observation how my Lady Draper took great care to put her Granddaur. before her, to show what A person of quolity he had married. Mr. St. Amand hath latly bought for his son that is married A plas in the Marshalsea, which hath cost him above £800, but I feare he'll never doe much good with it, all good parents has not the fortun to have Children answer ther expectasions; it is time to reles you from the troubell of reading thes bloteid lines."

It is to be feared that Margaret Adams might have added that not all good children had parents to their satisfaction.

Lady Fermanagh, at Claydon, to Lord Fermanagh, in London

23 Nov.
1710.

"... Now as to matters at home, they are much as when you left us. I went about to see what Company was in the House besids our own family, & when the Bells rung, according to Custome, old

Harding come in, so I asked him who he would speak with, & he said Mr. Challoner. I told him he was not at home, so he went to goe by me to dinner, & I told him that he came every day so to dine when you was from home, that I would not suffer it, and sent him away; but as soon as I was out of sight he went round to the other doore, and when I lookt in the Hall, he was a-going in to sett down to dinner, soe I told him was that his tricks and I sent him away just before, and made him march without eating; but I believe he will doe the same in a day or two. . . . There was a fault found out in the Wash-house about the Copper, which was dangerous. Oliver Main would have had one new hung, but I only stopped up the place & let the other part alone till you order it to be new hung when you are at home."

1 Nov.
1710.

Robert Lowndes to Lady Fermanagh

"My Lady,—Robert Wyat the Bearer being inform'd your Ladyship has parted with your Butcher, has solicited mee to recommend him to your Service. I beg your Ladyship's pardon for the presumption, which I would not venture upon, but that I have had long experience of the Man's honesty and of the Goodness of the Meate he provides. My Wife (who has help'd me to a Couple of Boyes this morning) joynes her Service with mine to your Ladyship and the rest of your good family."

Lady Fermanagh is preparing to join her husband in London, but meanwhile she has domestic troubles at Claydon:

1 Dec.
1710.

". . . The Keeper is such a dredfull fellow that for my part I can't immagin what the maids will doe with him, for he went in the Beer Seller and he is more drunk than yesterday, for above three hours with small Beare, as there won't be a drop left when I goe away; & because the Cooke lock'd the Seller Doore in the afternoon, as I order'd her, Roberts being gon out, he nail'd up all the Larders & the Cook's Chamber doore, & indeed you never saw so strange a fellow in your life, & the gardener is as bad; I really think the maid would not stay behind, only that I tell her she will be in towne in a little while. I think you would doe well to write to Mr. Challoner strictly what you would have don about the House; that he himself must not be out on your business if the Keeper is out late or comes in drunk, that he must be keep't out of the House and Mr. Challoner should take care about the Gardener, & let you know how he goes on. I desine to be in the Coach by 5 aclock at farthest on Thursday, and I hope I may gitt there that night. Mr. Verney sends his duty, and Miss Lovett the same. I beg my service to Deare Mrs. Lovett & Baddow family; I long to hear the two

Boxes came safe. I pray God send you well, & pray take care of yourselfe."

"Dear Jewell,—I had all the things I believe by the Carrier but Mrs. Lovett's bundle, which I heare nothing of yet; I had three Barrels of Oysters come down, I hope you will have the Pheasants come sweet and good though I had liked not to send them, the man imposing on me and would have a Shilling; he came in to dinner and eate and drunk and I would give him but six pence, and he refused to take it, so I told him he was an unreasonable fellow to come and eate and drink and not take the money, so I bid him begon and was very angry with him, but the Gentleman came back again and took the money. I hear nothing of Mrs. James as yet nor have we anybody but our own Family. Yesterday the Doctor and his Lady and Sue Busby, Mrs. Barker and her mother and Mrs. Holiday, came to see us in the afternoon, and I kept them here all the evening. They eate a barrell of oysters, and I gave them a dish of Chickings, some brittish Kollops, and three wood-cocks, and they was very merry and sent their service to you, and the Doctor said very hansom things of you. I thought what I did shewed that none here tooke things soe ill as was reported of him, for I found people are very industrious if they coud to make a differance amongst us. . . . I must begg my Deare to send me down a quarter of a pound of Green Tea and three pounds of broaken Loafe Sugar, for I have not a dust in the house, and Mrs. Butterfield desires a pound of the best Coffee. . . . For God's sake take care of yourself and I begg Mrs. Smith will make your Rosemary Possett."

2 Dec.
1710.

Their coffee comes from London, supplied by Deborah Holliday.

A list of Lord Fermanagh's shoppings includes a hot-water bottle, "Tobacco Toyes, to light Tobacco; Tart Pans, Aquavitae, and Ginger".

Lady Fermanagh writes about the death of Mr. Challoner at East Claydon, a relation, perhaps a brother, of their steward:

". . . The Dumb Boy is dead that was shott, & Jack Busby is dead. . . . There is such robbing that I never heard on since I came into Buckingham. They robb between us and Dr. Busby's, I have the back dore locked, & the Key brought up to me as soon as it is dark. Mrs. Greenville I heare is very much pleased with her daughter in-law. I have given the Gardener the Pease and Beans, which came down by John Innes, but he is much abroad & I feare for noe good. He went to Buckingham & stayed till night, & never had the manners to ask leave, & now I have sent for him he can't be found, soe pray thinke of this thing & whether you will keepe

4 Dec.
1710.

him or noe. By his going you must sopose that they who are under him doe nothing. . . . Sir E. D. is at Middleton, some says ill—and others the contrary.”

5 Dec.
1710.

Lord Fermanagh, in London, to Ralph Verney

“Deare Ralph,—I have had but one letter since you left. Lady Glasford is dead, and to be buried in Wiltshire. Jack Busby dead in the West Indies, by which his brother the Dr. saves £80 per annum. Dickey [Sir R. Temple] carried his wife home in a hired Coach, but I heare he comes up in six weeks or two months to make a figure, by which time his Equipage is to be made ready.

Great Robbing in Bucks, two Robberies near Thame Hall, the Carrier was robb’d in Nor’marston field. A man robbed of £43 13s. at Shipstowne End. Merwin’s Studdy broak open at Winsloe, and he robb’d of between 60 and 80 pounds, hee is under Sheriff to Mr. Grange of Horwood. I have a terrible cold, which hath kept me from Westminster a weeke, but now I am pretty well & meane to be there tomorrow. I knowe not where Sir E. D. is but I suppose he is still at Middleton. A Fine Chart. making in Long Acre for Lord Conway, the Coachmaker told me it was for a wedding with a Maide of Honour, Mrs. Wyvell, if anything be in it.

My Service to Mr. Pascall, Mrs. Pascall, and Bell. God bless you both and the Child. All are well in Sussex Street. Pray return the writing Sign’d and Seal’d concerning the Quainton Alms-house. Vickers longs to heare from you, & so doth your loving father.”

17 Dec.
1710.

Lady Fermanagh, at Claydon, to Lord Fermanagh, in London

“My Deare,—I have just now had your letter and will send up what you order’d as to the knives and forks and spoons. . . . Here is four Cakes of Mr. Piggott’s Gingerbread, I will take care to send you more. I will take care of all things that lyes in my power, but some of our servants are most beasts than Christians, they kill the Turkeys in the Yard, cut them in the mouth, & chop off a Legg of a Capon, & such strange things as I never saw in my life. They have drank up all the small Beere, which would have lasted till four or five dayes after I was gon, but I shall starve them in their kind. I will tell Mr. Challoner about the Board waggess to-night, & will not sett out here till Thursday morning, & hope I may gett through that night; if not I will lye att Dantrey, & I am sure it would be cheaper than to have you meet me.”

30 Dec.
1711.

By the end of the next year John George the keeper has been discharged. There is a list of the arms and tools which “hee left in the shopp when he went away”, including “One very long Gun,

one Carbine, one pair of Troopers' Pistils, one pair of Dutch Pistils, and a pair of Molds to make Bullets with".

Lady Fermanagh to Lord Fermanagh

11 Jan.
1711.

"... I think you much in the right to tell the Gardener that if he don't like his Bord Wagges he might go. For if people will be putt upon by such fellows they may, for I think such as he and the Keeper are enough to spoil the hole Parish. . . . If you please to be advised by me, I desire you to proffer yourself without asking to be Godfather, for Mr. Willis has been very kind and spent a great deal of money at the Election, and I daresay in the long run it will be money saved in your pocket; besides you have been to Mr. Lowns and others, and I think you can't do less; and pray tell him if he wants a Godmother more than a Godfather that your wife will be one in your room . . . I am in Mr. Dormer's mind, I would not lose my Interest now I have it, but keep it up if possible."

Lord Fermanagh does his wife's bidding; Mrs. Willis has a boy born a few days later, to their great joy; but as to the question of sponsors, they are already provided.

Lord Fermanagh, in London, to Ralph Verney

4 Jan.
1711.

"... I had a very bad journey into Berks [to Wasing] and like to have been overturned 20 times; the passengers alighted severall times up to the Mid Legg in dirt and walked for miles in dirty and splashy wayes, but I ran all risks in the coach, being unable to walk; at length I returned to London about nine at night. At Claydon the family were frightened, and rang the dinner bell and shot a gun, on which the Townspeople came in but found nobody nor anything lost."

Travellers in summer suffered no less severely from the opposite condition of the "wayes".

Lady Fermanagh to Lord Fermanagh, in London

1 Feb.
1711.

"All is well here only the Lead stole off the Church and more off the Chancel. I believe when the roges was in my ballconey it was more to try to gett the lead off then to come into the Chamber. . . . Not having any small beer we drinke Mr. Challoner's bord wagges beer, for none of the strong beer has been tapp'd, and I am resolved none shall while I stay. The servants go on as they did, and are now very orderly; and I dress only for ourselves."

19 July
1711.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

"The Wido Babor [Barber?] married her second daughter to one Mr. Marten that lives in this street, his father was once A Mercer, but found he could Improve his money better than by his trad, left that and tis said he is now a very rich man. I wish he may prove a good husband but many besids myselfe thinks he has a very crabid loock."

29 May
1712.

Ralph Palmer, junr., to Ralph Verney

"... We are very fine at Chelsea, the front of our house is new pointed & rub'd all with red brick & the remayns of the old dead Phillarea taken quite away. . . . There are a thousand lyes coin'd every day about War and Peace, but most well affected people doe conclude it will be Peace, I am sure we all want it. . . . The Lutts. are sadly out of conceit with their house, She crys if her husband goes to town but for a day, & calls it a jayl, & runs out in Enconiums on her London dog-hole. So I suppose somebody or another will get all his expenses on it (which are not inconsiderable) into the price of his purchase in a little time when the Pother ripens enough for it. The young fellow (I hear under the Rose) has had another fitt in the night a bed, but the old folks know nothing of it. I hartily pity him for they have almost broke his heart. Mrs. Anne Baker has the small pox at Mr. Lutterell's, & was like to doe well when I heard last. They are in a heavy fuss about the small pox, Mr. Baker & his Lady are there and Mistress Sarah; the former & last never had it, nor Mistress Lutterell."

29 May
1712.

Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon, to Ralph Verney

"Deare Ralph,—I am glad you have agreed with Mr. Capell for his land, it's wonderful Cheap to what Land sells for hereabouts. I was in hopes some tenants would pay in their Rents, but finding that neither yours nor mine did, I took a tripp hither, tho' to little purpose, for not one penny have I received. . . . As for Wm. Daniell he hath lost near twenty pounds this year by the Death of Cows, his Horse etcet., and indeed most of the Tenants have suffered much, Wm. Webb near forty pound—he had nine Cowes cast their Calves and some died. Parson Challoner owes me above a hundred pounds, for Interest; he saith he cannot pay me any of it till after Michaelmas, by which you may see how difficult 'tis to gett money."

21 Oct.
1712.

"Parson Vickers came hither from Stanford, Mr. Biddulph's horse won the Great Punchbole at Lutterworth, I believe your brother's horse was distanced by what I can understand of it, for the Dr. can give but a blind account. The Frenchman is still

here and I think will never finish what he has begun. Jack Roades was buried last Sunday but to come to what's more comfortable to you, two of your Tenants have paid their rents, I wish my tenants were as forward as yours, they are much more behind than they were, soe that inevitably I must be a great loser by them.

There was no Ball for the Ladyes nor much Company at the Race."

"Deare Ralph,—I recd. yours but did not write to you, because 2 Nov.
some of the Woemen writt to your Sister, and one letter from a 1712.
family is Enough when there is noe materiall business to write of. . . . Dormer, owner of Peterley (but lives in Hampshire), is now Lord Dormer of Wing, he is a Papist; the Old Batchelour Lord Dormer being not long since dead, I suppose you know that Mr. Tho. Saunders of Hadenham is married to Mrs. Hallet, Cousin to Mrs. Herbert. Mr. Tubman (the Banker) died last week, so that now our Cousin is at Liberty to get her a third Husband, I hope she will make a wiser match than her last was."

Sir Thomas Dunck sends an account of the numbers of Lord Fermanagh's Lottery Tickets, but with no satisfactory results. Lord Fermanagh returns thanks "to your Obleiging Selfe, for the 4 Nov.
trouble". 1712.

Sir Thomas Dunck, at Duke St., to Lord Fermanagh

"... Thare was a bad Exsedent hapen'd this morning about 7 15 Nov.
a Clock, the Duke of Hambleton and my Lord Mone [Mohun] 1712.
fought a Dewell in Hey Parke, and Lord Mone Deyed upon the Spott, and the other was Carried home and it is saide Deyed in a little time after."

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

"The Lawyers have not yet done getting money out of the Granville Estate, but I hope that Sute will not be so fatall as D. of Hamilton's and Ld. Mohun's was. This day my three Carpenters would have finisht the Enlargmt. of the Park, but the high winds on Sunday Night blew down severall firr trees in the Elm Grove, which brake down a Paleing and lett the Deare into the Grove, and the Trees are so heavy that we cannot Stirr Em, with all the strength we can make, so that I know not what we shall doe to raise them to their places again, and if we can't twill deface those walks before the best Court. There is alsoe one Grt. Firr Tree downe just between the Great and Smal Gates of the Grove. 18 Nov.
1712.

This high wind did also frighten our Women and Monsr., but which is worse than the last, it hath blown down abundance of my Tyleing, and a Chimney in the Grounds.

The Whiggs say in the Bandbox were Louis d'Or, and not Charg'd Pistols, so they have a turn to excuse their wicked Intentions.

The City are goeing to Law with the late Lord Mayor for unduly declaring Mr. P. Delme Aldn. of Langborn Ward.

It's said Lord Oxd's. Daughter is to have Marqs. of Carmarthen, her father gives £10,000 with her and the D. of Grafton is to have Lady Hariot Somerset, sister to the Duke of Beaufort. I hope my Daughter and your three little ones are all well in health; and that the Babes grow and thrive apace. God bless you all five, and what's coming. I am your Affectionate FATHER."

24 Nov.
1712.

Lady Cave, at Stanford, to Lord Fermanagh

"... Mr. Pryor said he'de call and give you an account of the fullness of our family, which has since increased, with Sir Rob. Clerke and Daughter, and my Sister who stays here till Parliament time, finding our neighbourhood now very sociable, and what is wanting in afternoons they make up by comeing early in a morning to breakfast; at which meale a Saturday last we had about 15 or 16, with Ld. and Lady Denbigh, the Coles family and others, and more to Dine and Sup with us, and this Day I returned visits to them in the same manner and so on."

There have been allusions in the letters to the Frenchman staying at Claydon, and there is a letter in French from Monsieur Pierre Mareschal, thanking Lord and Lady Fermanagh for their hospitality to him while he was with them.

16 Dec.
1712.

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

"Deare Ralph,—I am sorry the man would not be content with the house you offered with your land, for tis very chargeable to build houses and out houseing, for my part I never had a Tenant that was content with what I give to their houses, tho' I have laid out very much money that way. . . I have now some money for you if you were here to receive it; the weather is cold and the wayes badd so I can't incourage you to come for it, but you knowe you are alwayes welcome, tho' it be to fetch from your Lov. FATHER."

31 Dec.
1712.

"... Our house is every day very full of Country People, that its like an Election time. It quite tires me which makes me wish the Christmas were over, I don't hear that any of your Sister Verney's tickets are yet drawne, they are still in the Wheel and worth near 15 shillings a Tickett. I wish happy and many New Yeares to the three Pascolls, 6 Verneys, and 1 Adams, and am your Lov. FATHER."

*Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney*1 Jan.
1713.

"... I make no question you have been fully imploy'd one way or another but all your healths are so valuable to us that we can scarce bear silence with Christian patience. Since I wrote to you my son has had 3 convulsion Fits with his teeth, which frighted us much, but he has had no return of them this month. . . . My Wife and I dined yesterday too well at Mr. Luttrell's. I heartily wish you, Sir, many happy New Years, all which will ever be attended with the best Services and Wishes of the Chelsea Friends.

The Queen, God be praised, is much better, fine and well, and will be speedily at St. James's, her illness began with a Colick Fit, and turned to an Ague, but I cannot learn she has had above two Fits."

It was an arduous position to be Knight of the Shire, with a large house.

*Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney*8 Jan.
1713.

"Deare Ralph,—I have now 2 Tenants come to tell me, they will leave at Lady Day unless I will abate of the Rent, tho' the present Rents have been these 50 years and above. I am very glad Christmas is Ended, for we have had every day a vast number of people, but my servants say here were 400 people and I doe believe there were rather more last Tuesday, it has been a troublesome time; Every day with the noise of Either Drums, Trumpetts, Hautboys, Pipes or Fiddles, some days 400 Guests, very few under 100, that besides the vast expense it has been very tiresome. I wish all your family a happy New Year. This last night a Fitt of the Gout tooke me in the Foot, which confines me to my Chaire for I can't goe about the room. Lady F.'s Ticketts are now all come out Blanks, your Sister I believe hath 2 still in the Wheele."

Sir Thomas Dunck reports that he has had "but very poor fortune, but £10 and £20 prizes out of 68 Ticketts."

*Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney*27 Jan.
1713.

"... I find it's hard to let land, for about this time I used to have several come to me for Bargains, but this yeare not one did come, I sopose the Country is so poore they can't stock Dairy Grounds. . . . I have kept my Chamber these three weeks with the Gout and my Feet and Leggs are still so swell'd that I can get neither shoe nor stocking on 'Em. This has hindered me from goeing to Wasing, where my presence is much needed, have some bad Tenants (One Especially) that owes me much money and don't pay a farthing. As to my goeing to London I knowe not when that will be, for

people that keep their Chamber for a Month cannot readily propose to themselves when they shall make a Journey. Four of my Firr Trees in the Elm Grove were blown down and broke the railes and Paleing to pieces. Two of 'Em are large and heavy and were blown down this yeare before, and one formerly. They all lie downe so that I have not seen 'Em for want of Leggs, but I doubt if I did gett 'Em up they'll be downe againe on every High wind, and breake all the Fence down tho' propt and staked downe with Spurrs Cross the Rootes, for soe they were before."

1713.

Joseph Thompson, at Bexfield, to Ralph Verney

"Sir,—The Bearer of this, David Jeffreys, desires to rent the Turnpike in case the Justices shall determine to Lett it."

1 Feb.

1713.

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

"... As to the Gout I am just as I was. Last night we heard that Lord Cheney is dead, but I hope the report is false, for it would be a fatal Stroke to the Church party in this County."

3 Feb.

1713.

Constance, Lady Burgoyne, *née* Lucy of Charlcote, the daughter-in-law of Sir Ralph Verney's old friend, writes to Lord Fermanagh from Sutton, as her Trustee, to help her "To compleat my Business with the Purchaser who has bought my Estate."

Lord Fermanagh replies to Lady Burgoyne that it is difficult for him to search for papers:

4 Feb.

1713.

"For my Gout is still so severe that I can't crawl about the House without two Crutches and the help of a servant besides, but when I am able I'll search and if I find any such paper I will give you notice of it. My Deare Father dyed about 17 yeares past and I am his Executor. If I can be any ways serviceable to your Ladyship you may truly command me."

17 Feb.

1713.

Margaret Adams to Lord Fermanagh

"My Mother is mightily weaken'd by the loss of her appatite, but many such infirmities one may expect to attend her age, and I believe will make her loose the Title of Young, tho' never that of your Lordps. humbl. servt., and she pleases herself in hopes of seeing you next month, where tis odds but your Lordsp. meets the two Messieurs diverting her at Cards."

25 Feb.

1713.

Lord Fermanagh, at London, to Ralph Verney

"... I am sorry the Wind did damage at Baddow in your Paleing and Thatch, it did much damage at Claydon, some walls of the

house which were blown down, and a house of mine wherein Delafield did dwell is blown down, as are some firr and other trees. You are also a sufferer for Will Welhead's Barn is torne very much that it will be hard to keep it up, the timbers is so torne one from another . . . I was ill on Munday and yesterday very ill (of an Ague I think) soe that I kept my bedd all day, I am better now tho' I cannot bost much, being very faint.

The Burgoynes [Sir Ralph's most intimate friends] sold Wroxhall to Sir Chrisr. Wren for 19 thousand and odd hundred pounds. Mr. Tufnail did last year invite my Bror. Wright to take his freedom of Malden, where his father hath three houses. Wright did not accept of his proffer, by this I guess Tufnail had thoughts of standing for Malden. . . . There is six males wanting from Holland, and the Bishop of London is daily expected."

Mrs. Ralph Verney to her Husband, at Claydon

17 Feb.
1713.

" . . . I have no news but that we are all well as I hope is my Dearest; my Father is not at his old Lodging, the man's sister we saw ther lying dead of the Small-Pox."

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

2 Mar.
1713.

" . . . I heard something by Sir Tho. which he had from Lord Cheney of your declining the Farther Service of the County, yet I hope and doubt not their utmost endeavours and persuasions that you'le continue in that station for which you have such an established Interest, that none of Principle can equal or be able to contend with the Adversary. I heare there has been great routing of Burgesses at Buckingham. . . . I was told my Brother should be chose there, which nues I should be glad to have confirmed, I find he has writ you and I hope his Company will divert your pain."

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

3 Mar.
1713.

"By your Lordship's late Complaint of my Spaire paines in writing you draw on a great deal of trouble, for I'm resolved to pester you with the Scribble of every Grub-Street, and I know you hate to be in any way my debtor. The freshest news is of the Duell fought by Mr. Pine, an Irishman, and Sir Michael Biddulph's son of Litchfield, about a gold watch, for which the latter was to give £50 on the death of his father, but repenting his Bargain refus'd to keep the watch, upon which they mett behind Buckingham House, and soon ended the dispute by the immediate death of Mr. Pine, and tis thought the other will not recover. They were both intolerable Rakes.

The Lord Pagett has left his Grandson £20 for a Legacy, and all

possns. from his son to his Housekeeper, but the present Lord has seiz'd on everything, I confess that way of dying is monstrous to me. . . . There are many Medalls makeing against the day of Proclaiming the Peace, which tis said will be finish't publickly the 9th. of this month. Yesterday I carry'd Mrs. Vickers and my daughter to Chelsea, and Sir Thomas Dunck's, whose Lady was held in bed from the Gout. This day the Parliamt. was again prorogued till this day sennight, when the Speaker says he expects you in town."

14 Mar.
1713.

Ralph Palmer to Lord Fermanagh

" . . . We must lose a very good companion, when Niece Verney takes Coach, and we shall be much subject to the Vapors, and I am sure my Spouse will not be so well pleased a long time again, but the best friends must part. My poor little boy your Godson has got the Hooping Cough, he has been blooded in both arms, which we hope has done him some good; he has 2 teeth and three or four more lye swell'd ready to cut."

13 Oct.
1713.

" . . . I have waited for the seasonable time of sending you my congratulations for Success in your County election when it might pass you with privilege. . . . And am always concerned that Fortune has not provided me a freehold in Bucks to serve you . . . there has been a Universal Report all over Town that you were dead, I have had it from many hands, and on Sunday night the Lady Lyndsey sent to me her Servant to know the Truth, She having been inform'd soe by some Company that dined with her. I take it to be a Lye of Wiggish Abstraction, they are so good (or rather bad) at it, who would rob you of your Life if they could do it with impunity, as willingly I believe, some of them, as the County of your Service. But their's are *Bruta fulmina* God be thanked. Your little Godson is very well, but indisposed a little with his teeth sometimes, of which he has gotten six."

13 June
1714.

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney

" . . . Our young Spark has picked up his crums and is much improved in strength. . . It's talked that the Queen will scarce pass the Schism Bill by reason Ireland is included. The Commons have been distressed about ways and means, people begin to be alarmed at funds of 32 years which every year runs us deeper and deeper in debt, but I doe not hear any likely overcharge for the raising the money within the year, so how they will determine I know not. What shall we doe for hay about town? It will be £5 a load I verily believe, our Epuipage I am afraid will be demolished. Surely tis very dry with your uplands, God send us a good long rain, these cold winds drowth and heat of the sun makes it a very

sickly time both in town and country, but I thank God our little family where we have two within a year of fourscore preserves its health to a miracle."

Lord Fermanagh, in London, to Ralph Verney

20 July
1714.

"... Last Sunday senight W. White swooned in his Pulpit which hath much frightened his Sister Starkey. . . . Captain Lloyd courts a pretty woman worth £4000 and I believe 'twill be a Match but I am not in the secrett. I went to see your picture but Lovett's was sent away some time before and I understand that picture was to be a secrett, so I am sorry 'twas discovered to me, for I don't keep secrett such trifling things. . . . Mrs. Bertie's name was Newcome & she married him for his sobriety, her first husband being a very drunkard, & she being a woman of spirit yoused to fetch him away from his Comrades, remember me to my daughter and tell Miss if she don't hasten to Claydon the hangings of the Parlor and Hall will be eaten up."

"... I hope you will quickly let us know the day of your coming hither, and if you want the assistance of our Coach or Saddle Horses, let me knowe and you shall have 'em. I am glad for Ld. Quarendon's good fortune and sorry Miss Heron hath so disposed of herselfe, I think the maid that betray'd her deserves to be hanged. Your mother is not yet perfectly well, she takes a Dr.'s prescriptions morening and evening then rides after Each for an houre. Dr. Frewen Lay here on Friday, and hath ordered her a purge and a Vomitt which I hope will have its desired effect and make her well."

25 July
1714.

"When you please to bring your family hither, without repeating their names, I hope they will all come, & pray tell 'em so from me."

14 July
1714.

Lady Fermanagh adds a postscript:

"Deare Mr. Verney, tho' I have taken physick today yett I can't omitt writing to Lett you know how extream glad I shall be to see you and yours, and to express the satisfaction it will be to your Affte. Mother. . . . If I knew what fineness Mrs. Verney would have the thread I could tell where it might be gott, and whether she wants it, "to make Lace or to mend Lace."

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

26 July
1714.

"Dear Sir,—I find you as slow in your Journeys as in writing answers to mine. I much fear the excessive hott weather has burnt one of your Barns down, that you stay to rebuild it, so I wonder

you are not yet got to Claydon, which I have postly expected to hear for this two last months, during which time sure You have layd up all your harvest both ripe and Raw. Pray if tis not too much trouble, let us hear when you set out if you can possibly resolve on it before; the sooner we all meet the better, for I can't stay long. I suppose you have heard Uncle Palmer is craiz'd, if not I can show it you under his hand. I can't think it news to you neither that Lloyd is going to marry a rich Widdow Call'd Bath, it is to be over before we go to Claydon, and he preparing a fine equipage and all new Instruments related to that Ceremony."

July
1714.

Lord Fermanagh, in London, to Ralph Verney

"... Lord Tamworth hath the smallpox, the Whiggs are now strong, they carried it on Saturday for Southwark sitting Members 92 against 75. . . . I hope your affairs are almost Ended and that you'll begin to pack up for a Claydon Journey where all your family will be very welcome."

25 July
1714.

Lady Fermanagh, at Claydon, to Lord Fermanagh

[She has been far from well and Dr. Frewing has given her the usual severe remedies]. "The Dr. said if I had not sent and had been blooded and took things as I did, it might have proved of fatall Conciquence to me. Mrs. Butterfield is come down to Claydon in a hired Coach on purpose with her sister Sarah and a nurse and an apothecary—I find her doing it has cost Mr. Butterfield abundance of money, but he says God's will must be don, I will take care about Jack Woodfine. I am sorry the chocolage has vexed you and that you think a quarter of a hundred too much to send for, as for writing for a great quantity of things all that is always Left to doe as you please and if you don't like to buy so much I shall be satisfied if the contrary makes you more easy . . . my head acks so that I can't tell whether I shall write more than this letter."

15 July
1714.

"My Deare,—Yours I recd. yesterday and will be sure to take care of all the things you send down and nothing shall be meddled with till you come. I find you have agreed for a Charett—& your arms is a blue field, a silver cross, and five red Mulletts—the Cross is white in your picture tho' silver in the one that hangs in my rome. I am sorry that the picture you write on was to be a secret, I think all those things wrong, but the longer we live in the world we shall see the more on, tho' I think it a misfortune it should be so. Sir Amb. Crawley's daughters goe off a pace, but £50,000 Ladys will never stick on hand. The Tea-Kittle came very safe and is put by as you desired—I will write to Southall today about the Chocolate, as to ye Oyl do as you please, it is dear, and I am sure I never

Eate any, but I thought you was a Lover of it. They talk here of a match between Smith of Padbery and Biddy Able, and I was told yesterday he had been seven times to see her tho' I fancy nothing in it. . . . I pray God send us a happy meeting and I am your affte. Wife to command,
E. FERMANAGH."

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney

17 July
1714.

"Yours Dear Sir obliged me last night when my Lord (your Father) was so kind to come over and take a piece of mutton with us, He is well all but his leggs, he came by water and would not take our Coach home doe what I could, and intends at Claydon in a new Chariot and a pair of horses he has sent for up to carry him down. I am glad your little Gentleman thrives so, I pray God make 'Em all great Comforts to you and their dear Mamma, ours is well and has got all his eye teeth and some more are coming, but is a sad boy anights this hot weather, he is all life but very weak in his legs and thighs and very poor in his flesh which makes us long till he gets more strength and substance. It has been violent hot and dry weather with us. Mr. Marriot's fine young horse is either dead or dying of a violent cold and running of his nose and fever . . . he sent him up to Hide Park for some French Men to see and standing there caught his illness. Sir Tho. Dunck called here this morning on his way to my sister's House at Epsom Wells.

I wish you a happy meeting all and much good humour and pleasure at Claydon. . . . My Lord Chief Baron Ward is dead and Lord Massam has bought Sir Henry Seymour's Estate by Windsor. The Queen leaves us next week." [A sentence which meant more than the writer intended, as the Queen died about a fortnight afterwards.]

Ralph Palmer to Lord Fermanagh

2 Feb.
1716.

" . . . Candlemas Day, 1716. I must in great trouble acquaint your Lordship with the Death of my dear Father, as he departed this life after about ten days indisposition, occasioned by a great cold this severe weather, and his Asthmatic habit of body, both which fell very heavy upon his poor lungs. He was blooded and took several things by advice of Dr. Chamberlain which we thought relieved him but Growing worse again, he was blistered, but it would not avail. He was pretty sensible all the time, but I bless God lay quiet till it pleased Him to take him to himself. He is to be buried privately without any show by my dear Mother and near Dr. Hamey's Stone. I hope your Ldp. will break this matter tenderly to my Neice who must needs have a more than ordinary tenderness for him, which is as much as my trouble will give me leave to say."

14 Feb.
1716.

He sends Lord Fermanagh a ring, though the memory of his father "needs not the monition of a ring."

8 Mar.
1716.

"... Your Godson is grown a brisk boy, and I thank God holds very well, he is the life of this house which is pretty much reduced, and with his best bow is your Obedient Godson. He can say most of his Catechise and his prayers, and is so far the Christian you engaged he should be."

29 Aug.
1716.

"... This day we christened our little son Hamey, in memory of my good Uncle, I thank God both he and his Mother and your Godson are well. Mr. Verney and Sir Tho. Cave are so kind as to be Godfathers."

CHAPTER XVI

ELECTION SUCCESS AT LAST

SIX Parliaments had come and gone since Sir John Verney had first hoped to succeed to his father's political leadership in Bucks.

He acknowledged that he was a stranger then, but he had now lived for fourteen years in the county. He was known as a just landlord, who took a personal interest in every farmer and cottager on his estate, and knew their affairs. He had diligently attended the Assizes and the Sessions; had responded to the call of the church bells; had married his children creditably, and had found in his wife a helpmeet who was widely popular at Claydon and beyond it.

Lord Fermanagh was in his 70th year when he was at length a "Parliament Man". He was a member during seven years, but though he took an influential part in the Bucks election of 1714, his constantly failing health made it difficult for him to be in London, and his attendances in the House were very irregular. He had seen the dreaded power of France decline, and the death of Louis XIV., which occurred thirteen months after the death of Queen Anne. He had witnessed the attempt of the Old Pretender to raise a rebellion, and its failure, which had more securely established the Hanoverian dynasty on the throne. At home, the Septennial Act, which profoundly affected the future of the House of Commons, was passed. In all these things he took an interest, but the best political letters we have in these eventful years are those of Sir Thomas Cave, from the Tory point of view.

Lord Fermanagh would probably have been described as a Hanoverian Tory, "a Whimsical" as their opponents called them, though no name could have less fitted this honest and unimaginative man. Sir John's hereditary attachment to the Church, and many county friendships, induced him after his mortifying disappointments to come out for "Church and Queen". Curiously

enough, his local influence increased when Queen Anne made him a Viscount in the Peerage of Ireland; and when once he had been elected for Bucks in 1710, he continued as an M.P. until his death, and was succeeded by his son and grandson without a break—though the Verneys returned to their old faith when Party lines were more definitely drawn.

5 Sept.
1710.

Aunt Adams hopes that Lord Fermanagh may carry it at the next Election—"I am sure there can be no fiter person chose in Ingland for that busines & if the Parliement ware made up of such honist and understanding men ther might be a flurishing nation." These compliments preface another urgent appeal for money, for "My Maide Bety is to leave me and instead of rewording her for hir faithfull servis I cannot pay her, whot I ow hir".

At long last the family good wishes were to be fulfilled—John, Lord Fermanagh, was elected for the County, for the Parliament that met in November 1710.

After the nomination it was settled that Sir John should stand with Sir Henry Seymour, who was less well known in Bucks than himself.

13 Sept.
1710.

Captain Thomas Chapman, at Buckingham, to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—I hope the necessity of my afares will excuse the trouble I am now giving your Lordship, I have met with ill usage here from some of those Burgesses I had the most reason to depend upon. Mr. North is gone off from me tho' I have some hopes of retrieving him. I am afraid of Mr. Pully likewise, but I believe a warne letter from your Lordship might secure him. Mr. Price & Mr. Dorrell and some other friends have promised to eate a piece of Mutton with me today, but I can't hope for that Honor from your Lordship, knowing that your own afares require too much of your time, let mine succeed as they will. My utmost endeavours shall be used for your Interest and Sir Hen. Seymour's, and if I faile your Successe will be a great satisfaction to, My Lord, Your Lordship's most obedt. humbl. servt."

14 Sept.
1710.

"My Lord,—Mr. Pulley is now going over to your Lordship and my friends here are of opinion that if you positively assure him that he shall have no harme from you nor any freinds that you can hinder, this we have reason to thinke will do, for he owns himselfe that he has made no promise to the other Side."

30 Sept.
1710.

"My Lord. . . The Election for this town is appointed for Tuesday next at ten of the Clock, where I hope your Lordship to do me the honor to Meete some of your friends and acquaint-

ance, your Lordship knows very well how this Corporation is influenc'd by the appearance of Gentlemen, and I dare promise myself that after the favours I have already recd., this will not be wanting to your Lordship's most obedient and humble servt.

THO. CHAPMAN.

P.S. So soon as the Election over & our dinner, which is ordered at 12 of the Clock, I shall return to Newport with my Neighbouring friends to doe you all the service that I am capable of. We think to bring our friends in the second day unless you otherwise order on Tuesday."

Barn. Blackwell, at Newport Pagnell, to Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon 23 Sept.
1710.

"My Lord,—Upon a complication of the ffreeholders debts in your Lordship's Interest we find they amount to upward of £900 and we do not doubt if wee have your Ldsp. and Sir Harry's Order for laying out £500 in Purchasing those debts, Wee shall be able to keep them all in your Interest. The Number of the ffreeholders concern'd is upwards of sixty; if your Ldsp. and Sir Harry think itt convenient (as wee doe here) to lend that summe, Wee think the Underwritten Forme for a direction to Mr. Knapp will be not Improper. All the gentlemen here desire their most humble service to your Ldsp. and Sir Harry. I am your Ldsp's. most obedient and humble servant,

BARN. BLACKWELL."

The Order was as follows:

"Mr. Knapp, wee doe hereby desire you to buy for our acct. five hundred pounds Debts due on the Stony-Stratford Road, and wee doe hereby promise to repay the said five hundred pounds."

Lord Fermanagh to Barn. Blackwell

23 Sept.
1710.

"Sir,—On receipt of yours I wrote to Sir Henry Seymour, and drew up such a short Order to Mr. Knapp which I sent to Sir Harry to sign as I had done. I likewise sent him my thoughts as to Bribery. . . . I here write their substance which I desire you to consider with Mr. Knapp. I sopose many men woud sell their debts to some loss, and we buy on the consideration of having their Votes, and we purchase none but freeholders', who I see may be about sixty and its likely we shall have many of that number without purchasing; so that I think the money should not be paid (if we are chosen) until the time of petitioning abt. Elections be over; because these very men who sell their debts may be brought to be witnesses against us; but if we be not Returned then its reason they shoud have their money in a reasonable time, after we find by perusal of the Pole how they Voted. The Shopkeepers of Winslow

who are most Whiggs have bought in (as I am told) severall of these Debts, and doubtless the Stratford dealers and those of other Townes have done the like, for which they have given in return Wares at high rates. Now it shoud bee look't into that these Shopkeepers are not paid with our money by giving out their notes to their friends for that purpose. I hope Mr. Annesley is returned into the Country, that you may likewise have his opinion in these matters. Pray give my very humble service to the Gentlemen with you and you'll oblige, Sir, Your faithfull servant, FERMANAGH."

27 Sept.
1710.

Daniel Baker, from Penn, to Ralph Verney

"... Sir,—I have had so much company, and such a multitude of real businesse on my hands, that I have hardly had time to turn myselfe round; therefore knowing your Innate Candour relye on the same, and everything comes from Mr. Verney is welcome at Penn, and I flatter myselfe ere you return into Essex, wee shall be so happy to see you; for methinks Sir it is an age, since you was at my house. I suppos you heare Mr. Fleetwood Dormer has resigned, and desisted from standing at Wicomb, and that Sir Thomas Lee is put up in his room, and I don't hear there will be any opposition agst. him. I wrote my Sister word I believe it will be for my Lord's Interest to visit the Chiltern which prevayles more with the Freeholders than sending of Servants. I and all my family design this day to dine at my Lord Cheyne's, my Lady when I was there last week being so very pressing my wife should come; and tomorrow Lieutenant Generall Webb's Nieces (and other company) are to dine here with us; and my Sons intend very shortly to pay a visit to Claydon before they goe for London and Cambridge."

The Baker boys fully appreciated the fun of a contested election, and were anxious to help their aunt, who was working hard in her husband's cause, and with evident success.

There are several sheets of accounts dated 4th and 5th of October 1710, of the charges in procuring freeholders "at Stoke Poges and towns adjacent and sending them in Coaches and on Horseback etc." to Aylesbury Election. "For treating the Freeholders at Winsor, Denham, Colbrook, Datchett, Uxbridge, and at Stony Stratford, in the Chiltern Hundreds, and in many other places." "For trumpetts and six trumpetters at one guinea each; for four Drumms and Drummers at half a guinea; seven fiddlers, four Constables, Messengers, Hostlers, and Waiters, Bellringers and Carriers,"—a large and miscellaneous company. But this

expense was cheerfully incurred, for at long last Lord Fermanagh was Member of Parliament for the County of Bucks.

Ralph Verney seems to have knocked himself up at Aylesbury, presumably in working for his father, with which Daniel Baker was "extreamly concerned".

Daniel Baker to Ralph Verney, at Claydon

7 Oct.
1710.

"... I stay'd near an hour at the Coffee House [at Aylesbury] hoping I should have seen you again, but my two sons going so early the next morning for Cambridge, and I having businesse with them before they sett out, I could not possibly stay to hear the Issue of my Brother's Election. But now these come to congratulate my Lord & my Sister & Mr. Verney on the Successe; and indeed since my Lord so lately declared as to his standing, tis much he should have the most Votes of them all; and I find by the Poll, 'twas a very hard battle; and I believe moreover 'twas well fought on both sides. I am inform'd on all hands how sedulous my Sister was in managing her part as to the Pleasing all the Freeholders that came to the House; and her Art is so much extolled in the Chiltern, that all persons say no one could have better Acted her part; so Mr. Duncombe of Broughton & Mr. Serjeant did tell me, as also my Lord Cheyne & several others, and Mrs. Fleetwood allso did tell mee they want mightily to see her in the Chiltern that they may all return her and my Lord their thanks for the same.

I hope, Sir, you will excuse this long digression, I will leave that for my Sister to heare when she comes in these parts, tho' before I conclude, I heare think it convenient not to omitt one thing which did indeed surprise me when my Sons told me of it—viz: that you heard at Claydon that I made all the voyces I could not only against Sir Harry but allso my Lord. Now if directly or indirectly, or by any secret wayes in the world, I either tempted or asked for one vote against my Brother, I will forfeit my head; tho' I can aver I got a good many for him that would have been other wayes. And my Bror. Luttrell etc. can wittnesse and vouch for the truth of this fact, tho' I hope this Purgation is needlesse; but we live in such a Lying Age that indeed Innocence now is no proof against Lyes, tho' I thank God that dus so animate me, that no storyes will affect or disturb me."

After the election, requests pour in from all parts of the county, each petitioner considering that the victory was won by the particular exertions of him and his friends. Gentlemen, lay and clerical, earnestly desire to be on the Land Commission; others as Commissioners to manage the duty on leather. Clerks and small place-

men of various degrees consider that an M.P. is fully able to satisfy their most reasonable requests. In February 1711 there is a correspondence with the Widow Mallard at Stony Stratford. Lord Fermanagh has supplied her with a News Letter during the election, and any idea of stopping it is resented by the freeholders who meet at her Coffee House. Another establishment close by, which is patronised by the opposite party, gets the News free, and she will be jeered at and deserted by her own customers unless their Member continues to supply her need.

26 Oct.
1710.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

"... I am glad my felow bumkings has bin so wis at last, as to chues you for their representef. I am well asuerd ther will not be a fiter person in the Holl numbar then yourselfe for that business, you'll heare by my Nephew Verney how things goe in Essex, it is thout the towne will be fuller this winter then it has bin this forty yeare, and that it begins to fill already."

10 Oct.
1710.

Ralph Palmer to Lord Fermanagh

"I do with pleasure and the rest of your friends in Chelsea, congratulate your Lordship's Election, and wish Sir Harry Seymour had been your partner . . . though I hear he will be certainly in for some Borough in the West by the Interest of the Bp. of Winchester; who being bound by a very considerable debt to him must serve him, tho' against his Inclinations, as his Endeavours at present in that country sufficiently testifie. I can make no manner of Judgment how this County or its neighbour Surrey will fare, for in discourse they are sure on both sides and I believe will be a hard struggle. I long to see how it will goe in the West where the Burroughs are numerous.

Here is no publick intelligence at present. The Bank had a special Court today, being so overloaded with the quick circulation and Influx of Excheqr. Bills, that they are making another Call upon the Adventurers, which makes much grumbling among those who are concerned there; and there bing so much of them abroad on sale In Exchange Alley that there is a great discount and like to be greater upon them."

24 Oct.
1710.

Mr. Henry Hoare to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—I heartily congratulate your Lordship's Success in your Election & my Father will be very happy in meeting your

Lordship with Severall of our Worthy friends this Winter, in Parliament."

Lord Fermanagh went up to London to commence his Parliamentary duties. His letters were addressed "att a Grocer's in James Street, Covent Garden". He writes to his son at Baddow:

"... On Monday last about 300 Membrs. dined att the Fountain Tavern in the Strand, and I don't know of one Whigg amongst us. We chose Lord Buckley [Richard, 4th Viscount Bulkeley, M.P. for Anglesey] to be Steward for the Like meeting next Monday; he desired me to be there, I told him I would, but I doubt tis to make me Steward.

30 Nov.
1710.

Dick Greenville on Tuesday last with his Wife (H. T.) left London for Wotton. Sir Ed. D. is not yet come to towne, some here say he is very ill, I have writt into the Country to knowe the truth of it. Greenville was married on Munday last. There are already 101 Petitions against Elections, amonxt 'Em Mr. Gore for Colchester; Mr. St. Amand for Steyning; Sir Thomas & Dick Lawley for Great Wenlock; etc. I have gott a very viollent Cold, so that I can't goe to Westminster. My blessing to you all soe rests, Your affect. Father,
FERMANAGH."

Mr. Baker sends a hearty invitation to Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Verney and to the Caves to make his house their inn when they cross the country. He is sure that Lord Fermanagh "is full of congratulatory letters but now they will be franck so it will be more easy on that account". His sons have told him of the very hearty reception they both met with at Claydon. "It is a very sickly time in other places but our Aire agreed so well with my Brother & Sister Luttrell that they design to stay here until I go to London myself."

Lady Fermanagh writes in November, when Lord Fermanagh has gone up to take his seat:

"Here is just come in a Trumpetter in a Laced Coate; he says he is the County Trumpetter and lives just by Captain Chapman, I sent him word my Lord was not at home, but he stayed dinner, & I sent him half a crown."

23 Nov.
1710.

Barnaby Blackwell, at Tyingham, to Lord Fermanagh

10 Oct.
1710.

"My Lord,—It was with a great deale of Sattisfaction I used my indeavours to serve your Lordship, and I earnestly congratulate your success. As for the men about Stratford Road, I have given authority to some gentlemen to engage for a few Summs that are not large and not payable till Christmas."

*Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh*23 Oct.
1710.

"Honored Sir,—The account of your Success was from all hands most acceptable news, & I was glad to hear by Sir Thomas you bore a great fatigue so well, & I hope no indisposition has since follow'd to eclipse the Joy of so great a Victory, upon which I doubt not your being crowded with congratulations, of which Sort I have the Sattisfaction to receive many upon this account from most of my neighbours and acquaintance. Coventry Election is over, & gone right, Mr. Craven & Gery having a great Majority, & the Return for Northampton after a tedious Scrutiny is at last made for Mr. Montague & Wykes, but tis said Mr. Arundle will petition and prove indirect practices used by both the others that may make their election voyd, and soe let himself in and set those two to struggle again for it. Thursday next is the County Election & tis suspected the other Party intend to surprise 'Em and demand a Poll for somebody when they come here, thinking that way to catch 'Em unprovided; but I hope such measures are taken as will frustrate their design, and make their underhand dealings appear more odious. Our kinsman Sherrard is outed in Rutland and Lord Finch in with Mr. Noel a naught. . . . I want much to hear Something of my sister Lovett, having had but one letter since she went, which I answered as quick and have heard nothing since. . . . Mr. Roger Cave has the smallpox at Coventry Schol, but is in the way of recovery."

28 Nov.
1710.

Mr. Lowndes writes on behalf of Mr. Mathias Rogers reminding Lord Fermanagh of the services rendered by his father in the Election, and he fears that he may be "removed" in consequence.

There is a correspondence during December with Lord Cheyne "touching Commissioners for the Land Tax" (December 6 and 13).

15 Dec.
1710.*The Earl of Litchfield, at Ditchley, to Lord Fermanagh*

"... I have not had opportunity before now to give your Lordship Joy of the successe in your Election, which I with great satisfaction congratulate you upon; hoping my Servant obeyed my orders in speaking to all those I can influence to be for your Ldsp. and Sir Henry Seymour, & they writt me word they did so, letting them know I would take it as a perticular favour to myselfe. Since Sir Ed. Cobs [?] designe in Bucks, he has bin tampering with the Commissioners on this side this County to gett me double Taxed, but could not carry his point, & he is such a one that I believe will be restlesse in both Counties to procure it. However, I am extreamly obliged to your Ldsp. for the paynes you took to

hinder him in Ashenden Hundred about 2 years agoe. I have bin laime, both in hand and foot of the Gout, ever since I came hither from the Bath six weeks agoe, but I am recovering and hope to be in Towne quickly, soe that Mr. White need not give himselfe any trouble in this affair till I waite upon you there.—Who am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

LITCHFIELD."

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

18 Jan.
1711.

"Deare Ralph,—Your letter of the 15th was carried to Lord Fawconborghs, who opened it and sent it me the next day; this is the second time he hath so done, which shewes he never reads a direction. I was on Monday till 12 at night on the Brackley Election, where Charles Egerton was voted out and Captn. John Burgh voted in his room; last night I was till Eleven at night on Your Colchester Oyster Election—when Sir Thomas Webster was voted out, and Mr. Gore voted In in his room; and I was this day four hours hearing the Rutland Election, when not above half the Witnesses being Examined, and I having severall letters to write, left the House but hope Mr. Nowell will lose it. Ld. Nottingham etc. sate in the Gallery. . . . I think I ritt you word the Measles were much at Claydon and our Maid Mary Davies also hath them."

Sir Thomas Cave, at the Three Flowerpots, King Street, Covent Garden, to Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon

2 Dec.
1711.

"My Lord,— . . . Yesterday we carried our address to the Queen; her Majesty's answer was in the following words: 'This very dutifull address is what I expected from the Zeal and Loyalty of such an House of Commons. I return you my hearty thanks for the Confidence you have in me, I intirely rely upon your assurances, and you may depend upon my affectionate care for your Interests.' A motion was this day made in the House that the Commissrs. of Public Accts. might lay before Us what observations they have made; and Walpole apprehends that they have some against him, that he rages violently at their not telling him what they are. The Speaker carried me home with him today, and asked me when you came up and our Serjeant being present I replied not a great while, except we fetcht him or cleared the road of robbers. . . . Captain Lloyd has curst his Company up, but for me, he gives you his service."

Sir William Bromley, elected Speaker 23rd November 1710, was a relation of Sir Thomas Cave's. He was educated at Christchurch, and was then a Member for Oxford University. He was a cultivated

man and had published an account of a Grand Tour in France and Italy. He commended the Ballot Boxes in the Doge's palace at Genoa, which made it "impossible for the suffrage of any particular person to be known". Before Parliament was dissolved in August 1713, he accepted the post of Secretary of State and became the leader of the Tory party in the House of Commons.¹

18 Dec.
1711.

Viscount Cheyne to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—I have been severall times at Westminster since the Parliament met, with designe to speake to your Lordsp. that you woud be favourable and kind to send the Votes, the Post Boy and Post Man to Sherrington, at the Crown in Chesham, Postmaster, as your Lordsp. did last Session of Parliament. He has a Club of your friends meet every Friday at his house, who will desiert for want of hearing from their friends. Sir Edmund Denton furnisht another house most plentifully, out of Parliament as well as in during all the last Summer. Knowing this request to be in your Lordsp.'s service I could not refuse to send this petition of Sherrington's."

Lord Fermanagh replies from Claydon:

1 Jan.
1712.

"My Lord,—I had sooner acknowledged your Lordsp.'s favour but for Illnes and I had certainly attended in St. Stephen's Chapell but for the same reason. . . . I hope I shall be able to come up about the next sitting of the Parliament and then Mr. Sherrington shall hear from me."

29 July
1712.

Robert Tooke, from London, to Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon

". . . I am emboldened with, your Lordship, the trouble of this letter, most humbly to beg your favourable assistance, so far as you shall judge it proper, to my Lord Bolingbrook for an Employment, which I have some small encouragement from my Lord himself, humbly to hope for, My Lord himself having declared his intentions to imploy some diligent and active person, as Messenger of the Press, to detect as far as may be the Open Impudent and Scandalous practices of the Present Libellors against the Queen and Ministry. . . . If your Lordship should think fit, such a recommendation to the Secretary of State from one so well Esteemed and so justly Valued by him, would carry a great weight and give me the securest hopes of success."

¹ *Lives of the Speakers*, by A. I. Dasent.

Elizabeth, Countess of Lindsey, at Chelsea, to Lord Fermanagh

17 Feb.
1712.

"My Lord,—Upon the 22nd instant, thar will come before your Lordship, at the Barr of the House of Commons, the late Elexsion at Boston, a Burrow Town in Lincolnshire, by a Petition from Philip Bertie, a sonn of My own and Linds., against Mr. Cotsworth the Sitting Member; I must humbly begg of your Lordship to be pressint, and then that you will be pleased to favour me so much as to show him, whot kines may be consistent with your own honer, and justis. When his Father was living, his Principalls ware Hiee Church, and he tells me he is so still. I intreat your Lordship to give my most humble sarvices to my Lady, whom I desine to wat opou very sodinly; I shall ad noe mor to this, but to ask your paredon for the troble I now give you, and to ashuer you, that I am, with great respect and senserity, My Lord, your Lordship's most faithfull humble sarvant,

E. LINDSEY.

If your Lordship tackes notice that I spick nowingly of Philip in his Father's time, and only now say whot he tells me of himselfe, the reson is, that the late diffarances between Mee and Ld. Lindsey made me, in kines to him, advise him, to compliment his Brother so far, to ceep at a distance with me, which was whot I found hee expected from those who would be well with him, as it was Nessary for his own younger Brothers to be."

Lord Fermanagh to Lord Cheyne

Feb.
1712.

"Hearing that your Lordship is in town I give you the trouble of a letter to acquaint you with the reason that induced me to stand at Buckingham, where my carrying it is very doubtful, for that Corporation hath but 13 electors and my Cousin Denton lives so near 'Em that the Loaves sway much with them. I well remember at the last County Election Severall, and amonst others Sir Roger Hill, asked me, why I did not stand at Buckm., seeing that townsfolk come in so unanimously for me; but I answered that Sir Richd. Temple and Alex Dentn. were the late Members and both my Kinsmn., and that I thought it not handsome to indeavour to Josle either of them out; but now there is a Vacancy by death I putt in for it, Else they would say Twas pride in me that I would be a Kt. of the Shire only, whereas I might be a Burgess for asking, and no doubt but Sir Roger would improve such a business to my prejudice if he means to stand for the County."

Ralph Palmer, from Little Chelsea, to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

26 Jan.
1712.

". . . They have carried it by 110 votes that the Bread Money and the 2½% is public money and to be accounted for, and that the Duke of Marlborough's taking of it is unwarrantable and illegal,

and the resolutions are to be layd before the Queen by the whole House. Severall of the Generalls, Ross, Eclin [?], and Webb, voted against the Duke, some Torys for him, and some Whiggs against him. There were long speeches made and little said for him but Penegyricks upon his Services which all gave him. The House sat from 12 till between 12 and 1 at night, extreme full."

6 May
1712.

Sir Thomas Cave, at Westminster, to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

"I have found all places as void of news that one could scarce gather sufficient for a letter. Undoubtedly you think, and many others, that I went into the country to kill an Easter Puss, but indeed I never went out tho' my Horses are all so exactly a size and so good that everyone except myself calls 'Em non pareilles. . . . We had this day many and long Debates in our House about Tacking the Bill for Inspecting the Exorbitant Grants to the Lottery Bill, which in most people's opinion was unseasonable in this Juncture, as may appear by the Division—300 Noes and 80 Yeas. . . . I should be proud of your seeing our Northamptonshire performances; I suppose myself as well mounted for Strength and Stoutness as any Essexonians of you all, tho' Robin Abdy makes a great Stir heare, especially when he meets with people that know neither him nor his beast. I must now delever my Charge of Services from everybody here to you and my Sister, Mr. and Mrs. [Mary] Pascoll (the Man-Hater), with Jack Knapsack and old Ruler.—Your affectionate Brother."

?
1712.

Lady Fermanagh, at Claydon, to Lord Fermanagh, at Westminster

" . . . The Dormer's family is gon all to towne, they came to see us againe, because we was not at home, and the Judg inquired very much after you, and will say he made you Above a Douzin Voyces, so I said I could not be convinced of that, without the very men came and told it me thay had voted against you but that the Judg perswaded them to the Contrary. Mrs. Duncomb was in the Company, sure she is as devirting a woman as I ever mett with in my Life. But the Judg said, and held out his right hand, that that was the hand which sett the Queen on the Throne, and that he made her Queen. So I told Mrs. Duncomb that it was my Opinion he Crowned her Queen and made the Parliament man much a like. I askt Duncomb if Dormer was of the same principle in those dayes as he was now, if soe, sure it was in disguise, in short I never had the Honour to see him in a Passion before, which was all at his Neece Duncomb, and what past between them is too much to write; but in short I think him of noe relegion but if any a Presbyterian, and I also think him a very silly man, and his arguments

very weak; he was wonderfully complaisant to me, yett I thinke him the man that will look One in the face and cutt one's thought. I hope in God Mr. Tigh and you will make haste to gitt Mrs. Lovett's writings don to all our great sattisfaction. I would that it did but lie in my power to make her Easey and Happy. Mrs. Dormer says that she will fine me out when I come to town, let me be where I will, and compliments more and more. I wish you had but heard what the Judg would say with all my heart."

Sir Thomas Cave, at Westminster, to Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon 27 May
1712.

"My Lord,—As to publick news to be depended on, this place continues as you left it, and your goeing surprised me, yet I hope to equally and very Agreeably too by acquainting you that about 7 this morning my Wife was delivered of a very fine Boy, as ever was seen, and is pretty well for that condition. . . . You'll see by the Votes that the East India Compny. have petitioned for a longer term to their Charter, or rather a perpetuity. Last night Lady Abdy was delivered of a Daughter."

". . . Yesterday was a time of Hott Debate amongst the Lords, 29 May
and the Commons too, occasioned by Pr. Eugene's sending a complaint to the D. of Marlborough, that the D. of Ormond had a Commission to act defensively only; that in Councill of Whiggs extraordinarily assembled in the morning at Lord Orford's, and Lord Halifax made the opening in that House, and Poultney in ours, to address her Majty. that orders might be sent to the D. of O. to act Offensively—but on the division it was resolved by 28 in the Lords and 150 in the Commons by addressing her Majty. to approve of her Discretionary Orders and to rely wholly on her management. Poultney could not forbear calling the Court a weak and treacherous Ministry, that he difficultly escapet the Barr—I send your Lordship this supposing Vickers' omission; it not making well for his misguieded Party." [It was Mr. Vickers' part to send the News Letters to Lord Fermanagh.] 1712.

Sir T. Cave to Ralph Verney

9 June
1712.

"I last post sent you the Queen's Speech abruptly clos'd in a blank Case, which might have bin an unpardonable Omission; without giving a farther Acct. we are addressing the Queen to make A Speedy Conclusion of the Peace, which the Lords Debated a few days, but We have carried the Point there too, the Division being 81 to 36; and an unaccountable turn to most from that House, at which proceeding the Whiggs raved very violently, and are indefatigable in their Indeavours to obstruct the Saving of this Nation by the bills aforesaid."

In July 1712, Lord Fermanagh is appointed a Deputy-Lieutenant for the County of Bucks.

28 June
1712.

Lord Fermanagh, in London, to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

"... Three of the Coach Horses which you saw are sold to Mr. Montague, who is on Marriage with the Lady Mary Lumley, but Sir T. C. hath found out a sett of Six Topping Steeds and Lady F. was soe silly as to buy them all. So that I have now abundance of Coach Horses, but I reckon in 12 months my Doggs will have eate halfe of 'Em, or I must have better luck-thank than I have had hitherto. We hope the first Express will bring agreeable News to the Honest Party. Lord Sherrard is to marry Lady Rutland."

28 July
1712.

Edward Lane, of Hanslope, writes to Lord Fermanagh to request him to write to the Duke of Shrewsbury, to admit him to her Majesty's Privy Chamber, where he is satisfied there are several vacancies. He has been lately made a J.P., and has always been earnest for the interest of the Church of England. Lord Fermanagh replies that it is altogether "impracticable to write to a Person of his Grace's Station in the Court unless I were personally acquainted with him, and judg'd it not proper to speak to him without some friend's introduction, and certainly it's more unmannerly to write to one so much above me". In spite of this doubtful reply, Lord Fermanagh did write, and secured the place of a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber for Mr. Lane, who returns him thanks for that great favour.

2 Aug.
1712.

Sir Thomas Cave has returned home from the House of Commons, and makes jokes with Ralph about their steeds:

"I am oblig'd to acquaint you that there are very good horses at a place called Stanford, Northamptonshire, and nowhere else."

21 June
1712.

"Yesterday arrived the Male, which as tis reported brings advice that my Lord Orkney receiv'd Orders to march with the Scotch and Hanover Troops to take possn. of Dunkirk, but the latter refused to march, so replying they had orders to obey Pr. E. alone, which surprises many, they being in English pay. It has occasioned our adjournment instead of a prorogation. . . ."

25 Oct.
1712.

Captain Winwood Sergeant, at Dinton, to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—The Bearer, Mr. Keeley, has the misfortin to be discharged out of the Excise, not for any criminal fault but purely for a neglect, which I believe is done by most of them every day in the yeare without any detriment to the Queene. He has a peti-

tion from his Collectors and Supervisor, he has been an Officer in my neighbourhood this five-year, and I always found him a very Honist Diligent Man in his business. Now if your Lordship can doe him any kindness towards giting him in his post again it shall always be acknowledg'd as a very greate favour don to him who is your Lordship's most obedient humble servant to command."

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

30 Nov.
1712.

"... Duke Hamilton was a great loss for he was Head of the Church [Episcopal] party in Scotland, and one that the Scotts had a great love for. Wee have lost a great many honest Peers of late, that I believe it will be adviseable to create more, and your Countryman Sir C. B. is very likely may be one, by reason of his Estate and Consanguinity. I think we shall be drown'd in this Country, we have had so much wett that there are great floods to the hazard of people travelling."

"Deare Ralph,—Sir T. C. went past last night to Daventry, to see one of his horses beate for a Plate (as I am told), but 'twill be by the Rider's fault, for this is the Genll. Excuse. 12 June 1712.

Miss Betty Cave has been three or four dayes with her Aunt Pen; on Tuesday night she was hott and yesterday after her father was gon the small-pox appeared, soe she was removed to Mr. Stone's house. It's hoped she will doe well; she is two pair of staires high and Pegg Adams and my Aunt will see that nothing be wanting for her.

The Commns. ordered Bishp. Fleetwood's Preface to his Four Sermons to be burnt by the Hangman this day in the Palace Yard, which was done I believe. . . . Dr. Holland is in town, and Loe Church enough; Mr. Cobb hath carried him from Dr. Awbery to be Warden of New College; it hath cost Awbery money to trye itt before the Bishop of Winton, after he had lost it by a great Majority of the Fellowes. Little Tom Cave is much as he was, soe I hope he will live tho' few believe it."

John Snell, of Shenly, in Hertfordshire, to The Right Honorable the Lord Viscount Ffermanaough, present Knight of the Shire for Bucks. If the messinger of the Peny Post knows his house, London or Westminster, to carry it Thether; if not to be left at the Lobby of the Honorable House of commons with the Officer That takes In The Letters for the Honorable Members Tho' In Westminster 24 Apr. 1712.

"My Lord,—I make bold to put your Honor in mind of what you were pleased to promise at your seate in Bucks last Autumn: to me,

viz. you would insert my name in this year's Land Tax for a commissioner for the County of Bucks. I believe your Lordship is pritty well satisfied I am hardly used, because you gave your selfe the trouble to looke over the rate: I desier nothing but neighbours' fare in everything, and I hope when it lyes in your power you will doe me right, for my selfe and prediceser have bin damiged to some hundred of pounds vallew in the rates & taxes within this forty yeares, and I can gitt noe Tenant to take it without I pay all rates & Taxes because I am soe abused. I humbly beg your pardon and make bold to subscribe myselfe, your honnors most obedient servant.

P.S. I have bin soe lame and inferme for some time: I cold not have come in person to waite on your Honor this setions of Parliament."

1 Feb.
1712.

Lord Fermanagh to Mr. Chaloner at Claydon

"I see that you made interest rightly for Mr. Drake and Sir Thos. Lee. Lord Cheyne told me where you can get but one vote; it must be for Mr. Drake, tho' all indeavours must be used to get the other for Sir Tho. Lee. Hampden has declined, and surely Mr. Dormer will do so too, for tis in vain for him to stand at Chesham, where there is near 300 are mightily well inclined for Mr. D. and Sir D. L., and so is almost all the Chiltern; they will carry it by a vast majority if opposed, but I cant think Mr. Dormer will stand it. I cant imagine how so many groundless reports gets about the country, yet tis always so at such times. . . . My wife would have a turkey and three fowls, dead, sent by the carrier. I hear Sir John Whitterwrong's is to be sold; could you hear of what value it is, for if it is not too big I would buy it."

At the next General Election in the autumn of 1713, Lord Fermanagh was returned both for the County and for Amersham, and chose to sit for the County with John Fleetwood. Richard Hampden and Sir Roger Hill were returned for Wendover.

His family were jubilant; Lord Fermanagh's widowed daughter, Mary Lovett, writes:

". . . I must beg leave to assure you that my Joy was equal to your Victory, which I think there can be no greater; and I hope you'll long Injoy your honour and be a terrour to your enimy. . . . I must express my pertickuler Sattisfaction in all things Dear Sir, where you receive so much glory, and my family's honour is as Dear to me as my life; I hear Mrs. Tighe is torned Torie, so hope the Whigs are all extinct."

There is no doubt in Mrs. Lovett's mind to which party her father belonged, although some other correspondents treat him as still a Whig. During the course of this Parliament the Queen's death occurred.

The last election of Queen Anne's reign, which produced an overwhelming Tory majority, to be absolutely reversed a few months after her death, made politics very exciting. Sir Thomas Cave's letters give in great detail his experiences of the Whig oppression of the Tory candidates. In Bucks Lord Fermanagh had scruples about standing again, as his health had made his attendance at the House very irregular, but this was strongly opposed by his friends. The coming General Election was still some months ahead. Queen Anne died on the 1st of August, but before the end of the spring Party prospects were being discussed.

Lord Fermanagh, from London, to Ralph Verney

9 Mar.
1714.

"Deare Ralph,—James Herbert is my successor at Amersham; I having been at above £500 charge for that Towne I think a relation of mine might have been the person, but when Somebody's turn is served, thers an End. . . . Mistresse Windham dyed three weeks agoe for whom her Lover Mr. Cresswell is in close mourning; she had neither father, mother or brother, but two sisters; they were to have been married at Christmas but for an Unckle of hers; all this I have from Mr. Cresswell himself. . . . It is thought Majr. Genll. Wade's Regiment will be broke."

Simon Harcourt, London, to Lord Fermanagh

3 June
1714.

"My Lord,—Had your Lordship not given yourselfe the trouble of writing a second time I shou'd have made your excuse when the House shall be called over; I am very sorry for your illnesse, and wish you a perfect recovery and all the felicity you can desire. I Hope you'l be well enough to be at the Assizes. If not, my good Ld. Cheyne and myself design to pay you a Visit. In the interim, I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,
SIM. HARCOURT."

Lord Cheyne to Lord Fermanagh

27 Aug.
1714.

"My Lord,—Since the Parliament is now prorog'd till the 23rd of September I presume Gentlemen will be thinking of new Elections. Your Lordship is the Life of this County, and by the assistance of Neighbour Fleetwood the Whiggs were the last time routed. I

hope you will joyne agen to give a second blow; then doubtless we may peaceably sett our horses together and our only strife be which shall be most dutyfull to our Sovereigne. My Cousin Fleetwood is assured of the Charge which I think need not be never so great as it was the last time. Your Servants goeing forth round the County without that expense to notifie your Resolutions of standing, will be sufficient at present, and fully inform us how matters are likely to succeed.

Till I know your Lordsp. pleasure and Resolution I will determine myself in no kind; I take the Obligations your Lordsp. has layd upon this County to be such that challenges all my poor Interest. . . . I beg an answer that I may fix my pressing duty."

It seems curious that Lord Fermanagh's influence should have counted for so much; but he had no axe of his own to grind, as he himself defines his position:

"My Happiness is, that I have no place to be removed out of and I am too much for the Church of England to be put into any, soe I shall live quietly under my own Vine and remain an honest Sacheverellian."

29 Aug.
1714.

Lord Cheyne to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—I have the honour of your letter, and am hartily concerned for your Lordship's Indisposition which has given you any thoughts of quitting the service of your County.

The Church Interest in this County was the last Election restored by your Lordship's great Industrie and expense of Money; shall that all be lost and nobody appear to preserve the Interest in the hands of our Posterity; if your Lordship be fix'd in this Resolution fatall to our County, I have nobody to propose but your Son my Cosin Verney, who has a right to itt upon all accounts, the foundation your Lordship has lay'd, his familie allways with us, and the considerable stake he has to support."

13 Aug.
1714.

Lord Fermanagh hopes for Lord Cheyne's company at Claydon to discuss the matter further, and promises his interest for any candidate that is chosen, "This family being resolved to decline it."

26 Sept.
1714.

Lord Fermanagh to Rev. W. Vickers

"Sir,—I recd. your letter and 'tis now the time—that high Boyes up go wee—for the honest Whiggs are bravely promoted into places while the foolish Torys are turned out of them without knowing the cause. You was so taken with viewing Majestie that you forgott to send the Scotch Memoriall, and you may send with it the Booke of

the Nobility of England, that which Collins printed at least two or three yeares agoe. I suppose the Baddow family are all gone to Calfland where I suppose it won't be long ere yourself and Madame Penney make 'em a visit."

Lord Fermanagh was persuaded to stand for the borough of Amersham when he resigned his seat for the County. A conference was held at Claydon, and the heads of the two Parties made an agreement that one Tory and one Whig should be chosen for the two County seats. The Paper, which had at first only a few signatures, was finally supported by twenty-one names and circulated early in October:

"Wee, whose names are underwritten, Considering the divisions and uneasinesses the County has long lay'd under upon Account of Elections, Doe for the sake of Peace and good Neighbourhood Agree for ourselves and such as we may have any Influence upon to recommend and Support with all our Interest Mr. Fleetwoode and Mr. Grenville for Knights of the Shire of the County of Bucks, and we do promise to each other to Deal sincerely and zealously in opposing any person who may attempt to destroy the good Effects proposed by this Accomodation."

Bridgewater	T. Wharton	Devonshire
R. Temple	W. Cheyne	Abingdon
J. Tyrrell	T. Backwell	Fermanagh
Mountague	Thomas Eyre	S. Harcourt
J. Witteuronge	R. Barker	H. Crosse
F. Duncombe	B. Turney	H. Johnson
Jno. Crosse	N. G. Drake	J. Essington

This Paper was supplemented by an election address, signed Richard Grenville and J. Fletewoode, soliciting votes:

"Wee being Encouraged by A great number of Lords and Gentlemen to joyn our Interests in offering our services for Knights of the Shire." 14 Oct.
1714.

Lord Cheyne believed that Lord Fermanagh's signature would "prevent Mr. Hampden from giving us any trouble", but he was mistaken. A protest against this agreement came out at once from Richard Hampden, who had been M.P. for the County in 1708-1710, which he sent to Lord Fermanagh, besides a more general appeal to the Freeholders.

Richard Hampden to Lord Fermanagh

"Sir,—Whatever Composition is pretended to be made for this County at the next Election, is without my Knowledge and against my Consent; I do therefore for the Sake of the Old Interest of this Country (which I will never forsake) offer my Service to them, and do intreat the favour of your Vote and Interest for myself."

The Paper containing the "Composition" was to be taken round by the candidates' servants "when they circuit the county to ask votes for their masters". The canvassers soon had two other papers to take round, from Richard Grenville and from Grenville and Fleetwood together.

A coalition in politics is seldom popular; the economy of an uncontested election was as welcome to the candidates as it was repugnant to the voters, who were threatened with a diminution of their "feasting and feeing".

Lord Cheyne to Lord Fermanagh

19 Oct.
1714.

"... The Papers goeing round the County will I believe satisfie the Gentlemen that both sides are in earnest to cultivate Peace and Good Neighbourhood. I beg some intimation at your Lordship's leisure how they work for the Whigs."

But a graver anxiety had arisen; it was feared that the two men whose return was guaranteed by such illustrious names were not true to each other.

Lord Fermanagh reports to Lord Cheyne that

17 Oct.
1714.

"Mr. Hampden takes much freedom with Mr. Grenville's name, if it be unknown to him, but severall believe it is a concerted affair to throw out Fleetwood."

24 Oct.
1714.

"... Mr. Hampden is very solicitous on his side, and sends his Prints to all the Townes in these parts where they are read."

7 Nov.
1714.

"The Ladyes are generally incenst against Mr. Grenville which makes us hope Mr. Fleetwoode will get many single Votes to cope with Mr. Hampden." How the Coalition was crumbling!

Betty Verney prides herself on having her own opinions, and writes to Mrs. Ralph Verney:

"Mr. Hampden did not come into the Composition but stands on his own leggs, and I have a strong fancy he'll carry it; the Country people are so exasperated against Grenville that few will

be persuaded to give him a vote, and all are dissatisfied att my father's refusall since he thinks fitt to be in the House; we have flying reports that there will be an Opposition at Amersham butt nothing of certainty in it."

Lord Cheyne is greatly troubled; he writes to Lord Fermanagh:

"Since Mr. Hampden is the only person that gives disturbance to the whole County, giving out that they would take from the Freeholders both now and for ever their right of voting, I think truly He ought to be opposed as industriously as possible. . . . If Mr. Hampden gaines his Point now, it will be more difficult to remove him another Time, when upon Success the whole party will joyne him. I am very sure they are now divided—for my Part I greatly rejoyce that he is the man push'd off. . . . I shall ever own your Lordship's steadiness in the Interest of our County as zealous for another's success as your own." 11 Nov.
1714.

A letter from Lord Wharton on his own side accuses Mr. Hampden of "Wilfulness and Breach of his Word" and other offences, but Mr. Hampden, quite unabashed, put forth another Declaration—

"to meet any letters or reports spread about to my Disadvantage. . . . I continue to offer my Sincere and Unweary'd Service to the County and shall not desist although such Reports are, or may be made, with an intent to amuse My Friends, and to make them negligent of My Interest." 25 Nov.
1714.

I have already made all the Condescensions that were Proper and Just, for the Sattisfaction and Ease of the County; but I am sorry to say that I find the persons who at this time think fitt to Oppose Me are not to be satisfyed with any Reasons which I can offer Them.

I shall stand by My Self, that the Freeholders may have an opportunity to assert their Right of Election and to dispose of Their Own Votes as they shall most judge for their Service and Advantage."

Later on, Lord Fermanagh is approached by several discontented Freeholders, whom he assures that the Noble Lords (the Signatories) "Do not *impose* but *recommend* the two men for their choice", and he asks them to consider that if every voter and every town put up the name of a friend what confusion it would make to the undoing of any Cause; but they went away "hott in their own opinions", and put up Lord Fermanagh's name in two market towns; whereupon the fat was again in the fire. Lord Wharton sent over express

to Claydon and Mr. Grenville made urgent inquiries, but Lord Fermanagh assured them both that his name had been used without his knowledge or consent, and related all that he had done for Messieurs Fleetwood and Grenville.

The distinguished persons involved were obliged to eat their words. Lord Wharton and Lord Cheyne sent round a paper to "Compose and satisfy the uneasiness of the Freeholders"—renouncing all that their former paper had promoted—Mr. Grenville being persuaded to stand for Wendover. Mr. Hampden, unable to stand alone, was persuaded to join with Mr. Fleetwood for the County. The confusion was further increased by Mr. Herbert putting himself forward as a Candidate for the County at the last moment.

26 Dec.
1714.

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

"... Dick Grenville has treated the Town of Wendover at Wendover; I have had a letter from Ja. Herbert that he designs to stand for this County, and I found by his servant that he had carried letters to Sir Pin. Charnock, Fra. Duncomb of Broughton, and Captain Chapmen. If Herbert don't desist he'll give Fleetwood and Hampden much trouble and expense, for the County are highly incensed at the agreemt. of one Whig and one Tory. Soe that if anyone stood that knows how to manage such an affair (which I Believe J. H. doth not) it would not be difficult at this time to get in, for the Freeholders loock to be treated. Herbert will this week be with the Ld. Ch. and I suppose his Lordsp. and the new Marquis will persuade him to decline standing."

The Composition signatories, who were so glad to have Hampden "push'd off", had really pushed him in.

The Composition being hopelessly discredited, Richard Hampden and John Fleetwood were returned for the County, Lord Fermanagh for Amersham, Richard Grenville and Sir Roger Hill for Wendover, and took their seats in March 1715, in the Parliament of George I.

Among the first election petitions were those against the returns for Aylesbury and Great Marlowe, but the objects of so much intrigue and correspondence were at least unmolested.

Now that the Bucks election has been happily settled, Mrs. Ralph Verney is bestirring herself in Essex. She writes to her husband:

3 Jan.
1715.

"There was a great many gentlemen at Malden but when they made proclamation to know if ther woud be any oposition a Captn.

Richmond's brother was got almost drunk and demanded a pole; so that put em All to a Stand, so they askt him for whom, and he said for Millington, so they told him he was already in the House and he had best take care how he made use of such a man's name. So they made procm. agane 2 or 3 times, but every time he insisted upon the pole, so they went to poleing but when they found only himself for Milln. they cheerd Mr. Bramst. I will defer the rest till I see you."

Among those who had thought and schemed and worked that John, Lord Fermanagh, should be, according to the tradition of his family, a Parliament Man, none had been more zealous than that loyal, old politician, Cary, Lady Gardiner. How her eloquent voice would have trembled with the excitement of the victory—but she had passed—

"To where beyond these Voices, there is Peace."

CHAPTER XVII

SIR THOMAS CAVE AND HIS ELECTIONS

UNLIKE his father-in-law, Sir Thomas Cave got into Parliament young. He was intimately connected with two counties, Stanford Hall being in Leicestershire, and the Park in Northamptonshire. His hospitality to the landowners of both counties had made him widely popular. We hear little of the contests in 1705-6 beyond the following letter. He got in at a bye-election in 1711, but he first became prominent politically in the momentous election of 1715, when the great Tory majority was suddenly reversed on the death of Queen Anne, and he won and retained one of the few Tory seats as Knight of the Shire for Leicester.

Sir Thomas writes at the opening of the Session in 1706.

"... Last night came on the Committee of the Election for Leicester between Carter and Winstanley, it is thought the last will carry it."

Lord Fermanagh replies:

15 Jan.
1706.

"Your letter brought me the melancholy news of a Petition against your Bill in Parliament. I can judge but little of it, you neither mentioning who they are preferred the Petition, nor what they alledge, I wish you may discover what ill practices have been transacted of late and be sensible of the Injury and Persons that you may resent the one and avoid the other.

A Friend writes that one Cope (a relation of Sir John Cope of Bramshill) hath Petitioned against your Bill, he is a man I never heard of, and hope he will make but little of it when he hath before the Committee declared his concern. . . . God bless you, and send you good luck."

21 Jan.
1706.

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... I suppose Sir Thomas has inform'd you of his sudden Journey to London occasion'd by a Petition put against his Bill



Margaret [Verney], Lady Cave.

in the House of Commons, what will come on't is yet unknown. . . . My Lady Cave has come hither which was the first time of coming to this place since Sir Roger died, but now her visits I believe will be more frequent."

Her father is glad to hear that the Dowr. Lady Cave has been to see her daughter-in-law, and hopes they will enjoy each other's company.

Lord Fermanagh is staying at "Mrs. Wilson's, next Doore an Apothecary's on the Lower Tarrass in St. James's Street, London."

Sir Thomas Cave, at Stanford, to Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon

30 Oct.
1710.

" . . . On Thursday last I went to Northampton, fill'd with the expectation of Opposition at our Election, having received severall Intimations from Sir Just. Isham, but the Whiggish devices were happily of None Effect, & we had once more the favour to see Sir Just. & Mr. Cartwright peacably Char'd, to the great mortification of the other Party; Not One of which was to be seen that day; But if We may give any credit to some, the Whiggs had underhand attempted to give us trouble, til Munday last, their Interest being but little, then desisted, & Lord S. D. could not Endure the expectation (of our two Old Worthy Members being re-chosen) so near Northton as Althrop, soe went for London on Thursday last. . . . I take this opportunity of sending the Greyhound Whelp for Mr. James of Finmore, it is of the best breed in these parts butt being against Winter it will require the more care. I suppose it is not long between Interviews of your family's makes me give you this trouble with my service to Mr. & Mrs. James."

The following letter shows how much the Peers were concerned in the making of the House of Commons. This was a bye-election in Leicestershire:

Sir T. Cave to Lord Fermanagh

11 Feb.
1711.

"I am petitioned by Lord Denbigh, Lord Ferrars, Lord Crew, Lord Gernsey, and several other gentlemen in town to stand this vacancy in Leicestershire, with which I comply'd, but severall of my friends I find pre-engaged to Captain Tate of the same party as myself, and whom I left last night at Leicester fully resolved on a poll, though most are of a different opinion. The Sudden Resolution of some of my former friends must give the County a great deal of trouble, and make the Election more strange, to see Opposites now my Side Bearers, for by losing my old, Im obliged to make New Friends. I must confess twould be Unhappy to have

the Church Interest once divided, which would be difficult to Unite. I can't honourably recede from my Engagement, nor can the worthy gentleman that desired my standing desire it. My Emissaries are dayly at Work; and I wish the Election Matters were solely left to my Wife, who resolutely performs All, Sparing neither Two nor Four legged animals. If Mr. Tate does not desist I meet with noe Discouragement.

I am a true lamenter of your Lordship's loss of hearing, being too sensible of its disadvantages. . . I am afraid of my incapacity in returning the most civill expressings from your Lordsp. to Me, in your great desire to serve me in the Election . . . being assured of your good chance and steady service to help a Good One into the House of Commons."

22 Feb.
1711.

"... I am obliged to your Lordship's good wishes for my Success, and the kind interpreting my Real Concern for your present Afflictions in both ear and hand, tho' by the Vivacity of your writing None would suppose any Deficiency.

On Friday last Mr. Tate openly declared his desistance, resigning his Interest to Me; this day had the honour of Riding in the Curuli very peaceably, that I hope soon to have the honour of kissing your hand in town. I had a good Appearance of both Gentry and Clergy, among the first were Sir Woolstan Dixie and Sir John Chester, who are now your servants. Tis now late, but I could not omitt this early account of the proceedings."

Lady Cave is delighted at her husband's success in his Election. She is wishing to join him in London, but is waiting to see—

9 Apr.
1711.

"with what conveniency it could be done after his late Expense, though I would have made as little addition to that as possible, resolving to bring noe more luggage than myself, and maid and man, the Stage Coach should have been my conveyance, and his present lodging without removal I suppose would serve me, placing my satisfaction Intirely in my friends' Company and not in any Ceremonious Pomp. If the Session is still like to be long and he must attend, I can at very little notice proceed in this Scheme."

Sir Thomas was re-elected on Sept. 13, 1713, and the rest of the Chapter consists of his letters about the stormy contest of 1715.

27 Nov.
1714.

Mary Lovett, from Stanford, to Lord Fermanagh

"... Sir Thomas went from home last Munday about his Election business in which Mr. Bird gives him a great deal of trouble, but we hope 'twill be to no purpose. Sir Jeffry is out on the same account, they are both very hearty in each other's Interest, & by

what people inform us, the bent of the County is so to them; to be sure they have all the Gentry for them, it's said Bird is supplied with money from above, for to be sure he has it not of his own, his Intrest is the Duke of Rutland's and Lord Sherrard's so they must support him.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

1 Jan.
1715.

"My Lord,—Your tender concern for my Election was very obliging; and the motives of it considerable, viz. the trouble and expense; and first of these I shall never think much of, I confess to the other I must have more respect. I hope to have obliged all without profuseness, or any apparent danger to my affairs, and I'm now sedately prepar'd to attend the Issue of our Conquest, wherein appear to me some difficulties by our Adversary being largely supplied with money ab incognito, all the Great Men against Us, and our Sheriff a ranck Whigg. He has already begun in base practices, greatly endeavouring to disunite the conjunction between Sir Geffry and Me; Mrs. Packe is inveterate against Us on account of favours received from Judg Dormer's family, into which this Canary Byrd married, Sir Geff & I lay there one night but could not convert her; That tis manifest we must fight our way thro' innumerable difficulties.

I rejoice at Mr. Herbert's Resolution, and must wish him to persist in it, greatly wishing your assistance to him, and next win success against all endeavours of your worthless Lords. I could not have suspected William Purslin to have been guilty of such cowardice, especially at this juncture, I can assure you my good Neighbouring Peer rejects to make a compliment of his principles to any ministry; the method of your treating Bouroughs we don't here approve of nor follow.

I never thought Claydon a good place for horse-stealing, but since it so falls out I am sure I can accomodate that holy man with a steed to stick by him, he ambles, paces, and carries double very well, tho' he must not crack him too much, least he lose him by death or stealth. I'll use my endeavours for a greyhound for you. This morning Captain Lloyd and his wife came to us but we have not yet toucht that Card. We expect much Company on Tewesday next to commemorate Verney's birth. . . . I wish your Lordship a merry new year, and that we may meet well together in St. Stephen's School."

Lord Cheyne to Lord Fermanagh

18 Jan.
1715.

"My Lord,—The Proclamation of a New Parliament came out yesterday, and the Writt for our County will doubtless be in the Sheriff's hands tomorrow att the County Court att Alesbury,

where most certainly precepts will be made out to the Severall Burroughs.

Your Lordsp's. affair at Amersham is my own concern, therefore I send my servant to receive your Lordship's demands touching your being there in person, sending my Cousin Verney or any other your neighbouring gentlemen to represent you. Bois and myself shall be at your service, with a warm bedd and hearty Welcome."

20 Jan.
1715.

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

"I have been very ill of late but now somewhat better though not well yet, the Election for Amersham is next Wednesday of which I was ignorant till this night, which makes me send Mr. Challoner to you hoping you'l come immediately away hither, that you may be at Amersham and represent me, for I am not in a condition to Bear the fatigue. I hope this will find you in good health to undertake the Journey Else I had rather lose the Election than hazard your health by it."

31 Jan.
1715.

Margaret Adams to Lord Fermanagh

"I was unwilling to trouble your Lordship with a post letter, else I had sooner congratulated your recovery from your late illness & also your being again in the House, which I fear will want many more such true friends to serve their country at this time of need, not but that the country seems well disposed for the Generallity, but mony which is the root of all evill will tis feared have a great influence over the Boroughs. There is some pretty things in print which might help to open the eyes of the Blind."

13 Feb.
1715.

Lord Fermanagh to Mr. Vickers

"Sir,—You wrote to me about the South Sea Stock which I think is as good as any other Parlmt. security, so that if you and your wife do approve of it I shall not be against it, but I think it need be bought in my name in trust and I will accept of the transfer. Your Bro. Butterfield hath two of your Bound Books, I never read word in 'em but when he returns them I will look into them. I wonder Robin Nelson had but £5000. I am confident he had above twice as much from his Parents in Reddy Rino. Sir T. Cave hath mett with very hard Arbitrary usage from the Sheriff or Deputy, tho' the Flying Post gives him another turn."

13 Feb.
1715.

Mary Lovett, at Stanford, to Lord Fermanagh

". . . I waited the Freedom of Parliaments, and now that's come I beg to congratulate you on it. How it will go in this County we

cannot judge, for everybody says the like has never happened before. It's now reported the Sheriff hath lost the Writ, and will make no return at all, I believe that so much Villainy was never heard of as has been used in this Election. We hear from London yesterday that the Sheriff has been before the King and Councill, in a Coat and Wig all burnt, which he said was done by Combustable matter that the Barronet's party put to him, and set on fire; there was never any such thing heard of nor done to him, but a young woman in the Town has made Oath that he came into her Father's house, and fell A Kissing and Pulling of her, at which she gave him A Push and he fell against the fire and shinged his coat, which is all the damage he received as we can hear of. I fear it will be both a very troublesome and what is worse A Chargeable business."

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

15 Feb.
1715.

"... The Sheriff or his Deputy if not both, contriv'd all ways imaginable to putt Palmer and Cave by, and will have it a riot, I hear they have been before the K. and Councill, where the Sheriff gave an Honble. acct. of himself, and that he was insulted in Executing his office. . . . Give my Daughter a many thanks for her Letter and Tell her how troublesome writing is now to my shaking hand. . . Dr. Fruen was with Lady F. last Friday and hath prescribed her a course of Phisick, but I think she finds no benefitt by it, and therefore I do not consult the Doctors, tho' I am not at all well, I believe her ailment is chiefley Colick, which I think no Dr. can cure noe more than the Gout."

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

28 Feb.
1715.

"I brought up with Me from the Election the most severe Cold I ever had, and cannot yet find much abatement of it, and if you had seen what long letters I have mostly wrote about this affair to persons of Council etc. you'd never accuse me of Laziness; however I'll vouchsafe you a Narrative of our proceedings a principio usque ad finem. The week preceding the Election Sir Geffry Palmer and I mett Sheriff and our Opponents at Leicester severall times, to agree how many places to poll at, which We desired might be Six, for the Countries Ease and quicker despatch; but the Sheriff would not comply, and objected against all methods we two proposed, so at the last unless we would comply he would Poll at but one place, and that he'd make it last a fortnight, in which Resolution he continued as we suppose till Tuesday morning at the hour we came to the Castle. Our Parade was this—I sett out from home with what I could collect in this utmost limitts of the County, and before we came to my Partner (within two miles of Leicester)

we might possibly amount to near 600. He likewise there attended with another strong body of Men, and the Mayor and Alderman in formallities with Kettle Drums and Trumpetts mett us, in which State we went to the Castle, there long waiting the coming of the Sheriff and our Opponents, who seemed unwilling to engage, but by our Depositing Money towards defraying the Sheriff's expenses, for he would not trust Us Two, tho' he did Byrd and Ashby, he was with difficulty persuaded to open the Court, and granted Us that Day four Usuall places to poll at, with a 5th the next day, so to our Arms we went. To our great surprise after the Sheriff cast up his books that night, We surpassed our Adversaries by 360, which is more than the Spurious Author of the Flying Post will Owne to be polled that day, but tis true in fact.

The next day We repeated our Polling very quickly on our Side, tho' not without much unfair dealing offer'd Us, and about 4 in the afternoon the Sheriff perceiving our advantage of 'Em, sent for all the books away from every Booth, but where he attended, without the knowledge or consent of any of the Candidates, and on my Complaint thereof he sent for his Deputy to recommence the Poll at one more Booth who sent word he was at Supper, and would not come, so We were confin'd that night to the Sheriff's Booth, where for two Hours there was not one man polled against us two, which much fretted the Sheriff's temper, and about half hour after 8 he would adjourn tho' the room and hall were full of men, which I desired him to poll and then adjourn, but he rejected all—Indeed We had nothing but tricks to fear, at which refusal to take Severall tenders of Votes, one or two gott on the Table, to ask the reason of such rejectment, and were followed in their questions by others; this occassioned some little heat, but did not proceed to any threats or blows. However, it induc'd the Sheriff to induce one to take the Poll for that night, we did not poll above 50 men before a note came from Byrd and Ashby to adjourn, that after polling six persons the court was adjourned till 8 on Thursday morning. Our Sheriff at Leaving the Court desired Mr. Pryor, whom I made Inspector over him, to go back with him to eat some Refreshment, which he did at a Publick House near the Castle, and was during that time very merry, and expresst a Seeming Satisfaction in our Majority, saying he thought We should carry it by 1000. When we went to the Castle on Thursday morning according to our Adjourn't. the Sheriff nor our Adversaries could neither be found nor heard of till about 12. We were certify'd the Roguish Sheriff was gon for London, to Swear a Riott, at that party's Instigation—and I am inform'd he has, agst. Sir Geffrey & Me, with about 20 more, tho' tis confessed by all, that never was a more quiet Election known. Tis amazing how we came to outnumber 'Em so, for certainly Byrd was extream active, and must

send full £1200 which generally carries these affaires, but he was found to be a cursed Lyar, and I now fear, a purdger rascall too, to prove which we doubt not; as also to recouper good damages of our Sheriff, who is not yet made any return into the crown office, this is as near as I can remember it."

Sir Thomas Cave adds in another letter:

"... There never was so great an Appearance of Gentlemen and Clergy seen in Leicester all earnestly espousing our Interest, and Sir Nathan Wright was present with us the whole time freely expounding all doubts of Law in that Juncture. On Thursday we had 700 men more come in the Poll who were all excluded by the Sheriff's escape, and nothing could appease or satisfy 'em but our being Chair'd that night, which was performed with a prodigious Concourse of Spectators, and inexpressible Joy, the whole Town being illuminated; and notwithstanding our great majority tis said the Sheriff will return all for Palmer and Byrd. . . . tis certainly hard to have such arbitrary proceedings take place of Legall Majority."

2 Feb.
1715.

"... It is agreed by all that our Election is an Originall, if your Lordship has seen Flying Post you have found how different our affair is there represented from what I wrote you, tho' on my Honour what I sent you was perfectly true and matter of fact, which is ready to be approved by near two hundred spectators then in Court. . . . A printed relation of this matter I have sent to London and to the Coffee Houses there. We endeavour'd to insert our Case in the Evening Post, Post Bagg, and Post Man, but they all refuse us, tho' we have offered Security for the proof of our insertions; this makes good the saying that Truth is not at all times to be spoken. We have not seen or heard of our Knavish Sheriff since the Election, but we were informed that many were to be sent for up, & amongst the rest my brother Palmer and I, before King and Counsell to be examined, but I believe we shall not hear anything of that pleasant expedition. There is no return made to the Crown Office, but I hear that a return is preparing, that the Sheriff . . . without endangering his life did not conceive an execution of his Writt. . . . His proceedings have subjected him to severall larg Penalties, of which we'l not abate him one groat . . . the Sheriff says it has already cost him 30 pound in advice about this great Nothing, and he can't find who is to reimburse it, and therefore he repents of his journey to London. . . . Notwithstanding all assurances of my true relation of this affair our Friend Mr. Vickers will not credit us but is perfectly willing to believe all for truth that one Parson Willy (Son to a rigid Presbyterian and a Sorry Wretch) tells him; this young Prigg has so influenced this

21 Feb.
1715.

Doctor that he has affirmed severall stories as true, that my own eyes and ears can safely prove forgeries; it shall never affect me, tho' tis pity any man's principles should be so fluctuated, especially since I have never broke faith towards him.

My kinsman Dixswell was Byrd's elbow friend, tho' he neither had nor could make one Vote against me. Mrs. Packe wrote to all her tenants from London against me, tho' when Sir Geffry and I lay at her house, she gave us a specious show to the Contrary. . . . She ought to have openly told me, since I gave her an opportunity to do it. Sir Thomas Samuells and Oughton joyn'd at Coventry and have committed such extravagant irregularities that the Sheriffs, tho' of their own hearts' desire, are timourous of returning on them. . . . I hear from good hands that the Scotch Members are like to be a great disappointment to the Ministry."

31 Mar.
1715.

Sir Thomas Cave, from Westminster, to Lord Fermanagh

"Such a generall Complaينت of my Neglect of writing to my Friends might well shame me, were I not convinc't the consumption of my time here sufficiently surcease any charge of that nature against me. . . . I have before intimated to you the long fatigue of the House, which as yet is nothing abated by the frequent Elections at the Barr, where the Whigs weed faste to their own Fansey. We cannot yet learn anything of the Secret Committee, but tis said the King's Ratcatcher is sent to the Tower for suffering some of their papers to be deavoured."

5 Mar.
1715.

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"Honoured Sir,—While Sir Thomas was at home I did not trouble you with my letters, leaving it to him that cou'd better inform you of the real Trueth and most notorious Roguery ever practised at an election, and they continue now ther injustice by publishing such Scandalous and false accts. in the publick prints, where Trueth is not permitted to appear. Sir Thos. I hope reach'd London last night in the Northampton Coach . . . I think to send the Chariot to meet him, he having undergone fatigue of late and not been fairly well since, and this will give the opportunity for Miss Lovett [Bess] to come and try change of air. . . . Our younge Flock are all well, and the two Master Lovetts went so to school last Thursday, so we are reduced to a small number, with whose dutys concludes your most Obedient daughter,

M. CAVE."

27 Feb.
1715.

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

" . . . Mr. Haynes of Turston went by in a Hearse; he took his Illness Dancing at the Brackley Election, by Drinking Small Beere

when he was hott. This weeke at the Old Balley Robin Parott was found guilty of Felony and Burglary for breaking open and robbing the Bp. of Norwich's [Charles Trimmell] House last August. I doubt he will be hang'd this week; his wife and children are come on our Parish. On Tuesday our Assizes begin at Aylesbury, but I am not well enough to goe thether, neither is Lady Fer. Very well as yet, her two eldest nieces are here."

"On Monday night Robin Parott died in Newgate, so the Hangman has lost his Fee, and our Country ridd of a dangerous rogue. Three were condemned at our assizes, two of 'Em for robing on the highway, the other for horse-stealing. Nelly Denton is one of the King's Councill, by which meanes he takes place of all the Sergeants that are not the King's Sergeants. Four of the new Sergrts. came this Circuit, Page, Miller, Reynolds, and Balfield. Lord Winchindon is married to Majr.-Gen. Holmes's daughter, whose fortune is in Whitechapell; she is about 15 and he 16 last Decem-ber; how the old Lord takes it I don't yet hear.

There are about 70 Petitions lodged, amongst 'Em Chapman for Buckm. . . . Ar. More was tricked out of his Election, he gave notes to his Creditors to pay Em two dayes after the Election, which his adversary hearing he told Em, More would then plead privilege, but if they would choose him, he wold take the notes and pay Em, which offer they accepted. Then Banks arrested More and got all his money again, so the election cost him nothing."

Sir T. Cave, in London, to Lord Fermanagh

8 Mar.
1715.

". . . The mention of Lord Winchindon is certainly true, and Lord Wharton is trying allways to annull the marriage, tho' tis affirmed to be legally perform'd. Mr. Parkhurst's Son has committed a most barbarous and inhuman murder on one Sir John Pleuroc, a German Kt. and prisoner, with him in the Fleet, on which accident tis said Mrs. Parkhurst is much capitally disordered. . . . I have taken a place in Aylesbury Coach for Thursday and hope to be with you that night."

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

13 Mar.
1715.

"Sir T. C. came from London hither by the stage and his Charett with Mr. and your Sister Lovett in it come hither from Stanford, and when your brother goes hence he takes Miss Lovett with him in the Charett, her mother being desirous to have her with her for change of air, but I think tis all wrong; tho' I wish it may prove to the advantage of the child.

Tis said the Court have putt off Onslow from the thoughts of being Speaker, and that Sp. Compton may be the man."

29 Mar.
1715.

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney

"... Niece Lovett is come to town with Miss Betty and her Evidences. It seems now they apprehend (the Solicitors I mean) that my Lord Ch. will not make a decree till the Mortgaged Deeds are all proved in the examiner's office. I am sorry there should be such Knavery in business. . . . There is no other reason besides prolonging the affair and encreasing their own Bills. . . . Poor Miss Lovett's Neck is very bad, I advise her to let Cyprianus see it for his opinion and then I believe the Evil Parson if he thinks tis that distemper. . . . You know there will be a new election for Leicestershire, they have suggested in their petition that the two Knts. prevailed with the sheriff to go away. I wish one of them had never engaged in that affair, he was so kind with his sister to give us a visit and told me he had lost near £200 in horseflesh this winter; such things and such Elections I dread will come to an indifferent conclusion at long run. I truly Love him and am truly concerned for him. I pleasurably hear of the improvement of my little Godson and all the Olive Branches round your table; mine is wonderfully come on, prates much in his own Dialect, and affords us more comfort at home than the intelligences abroad doe. I can see no end of Taxes & the hardship of half a people's bearing the Burden that belongs to the whole, so that I think we must write over our doors Deus providebit. I growe either lazy or old or both, the publick won't let me keep an horse, tho' I am a Protestant, because they take away my money to pay for it.

I have parted with my man John, who has been with me 2 years and three quarters, which is an age to keep A Servant in these parts. But he was grown a meer sot, and perfectly regardless of pleasing, and I have got I hope a better, at least that is so now, in his room.

I have been this month lame of my fourth finger by a cut I gave myself with my pruning knife, in cutting down the laurel hedge, but tis now something better, and out of all danger. . . . I will not twattle to you any longer, dear Sir, than to ask your acceptance of mine and my wife's best service to you and Master's Love to his little Cosens, of whom he talks much."

23 Apr.
1715.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"From the proceedings in the election it was by most conjectured that our antagonists would not appear nor disturb us, but they contradicted by a demand in person for their poll. . . . Ashby and Byrd obstinately stood a poll of 3 days continually buying off our votes at three and a half crowns, £1 15s. od., & 5s. per vote, and asiduously endeavoured to procure all second votes for Sir Geffery which they could not make for one of them, that I'm sur-

prised how I gott to the number of 2203—Sir G. 2251, Ashby 1630, Byrd 1639—yet I hear the busy Lord Harbrow made very sure of getting the better of Us, we kept ourselves very quiett (though frequently provoked) and free from Bribery . . . that tis hop't no petition shall be preferred. Ld. Keeper Wright heard we were in town and lest tricks should be played we came to Leicester on Wednesday night, and stay'd during the whole Contest. He protests to spend his blood and Estate before this Country shall be nos'd by any Duke in Xendom, and sure the Ducke of Auckland and Harbrow must think Us very stubborn. Mrs. Packe was Agt. Us and I'll ask her no more. Esquire Digswell, my Brother-in-Law, showed his goodwill against me this second time, and the Shame returns to himself.

We are under apprehensions of his presenting the Scandalous Parson Willy to a Benefice in Warwickshire of which Dixwell is Patron, but this is only a Flying Report. I hear from Mr. Vickers that Willy now sneaks from Company, and is very silently ashamed of losing their Cause in this County. Sir Gilbert Pickering was satisfied of their having fair plaining in this election, though we beat Em by the same majority as in our former. Sir G. Beaumont was indefatigably active and Serviceable as were all our Friends. And I hope the whole County will enjoy a future Peace and quietness by this Victory."

Lady Cave writes to condole with her father on his continual illness:

"Sir Thomas went last night to Northampton, I hope before he returns he will find a way to be even with the Under-Sheriff for his Roguerys." 9 May 1715.

Mrs. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

12 May
1715.

"Pray lett your son read this to you, you not being well. I am much concerned your Lordship Continues soe ill, I beg you will try this of mine. Take a Leather and spread the ruff side with medetrath [mithridate] and honney, the best you can get, mix it well together with oyle of mase, some fue drops, & Lay it where you feel most paine, either one side stomach ore Belly. I have very lately knowne wheare it has done much good, and alsoe for a shortness of Breth, to Lay it Comfortable; I beg you to trye it and God Almighty send it may doe you the good. I beg daily for your perfect health and long life, and your illness is of that Concearne to mee that I do goe very Little a Broad, having noe maner of Inclination towards taking any diversion. Tis true my Birthday drawes neere, but I don't designe to keep it unless A rejoyceing day for your recovery. . . . My Eyes drop down with water to look upon the white paper."

17 May
1715.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... I had before this wrote to your Lordship but thro' an incredible fatigue from the constant attendance at the House, to which I have been the more obliged in hopes to prolong the confinement of our Sheriff, who this day repeated his petition to be released, and We debated and divided upon it, tho' all to no purpose, so that tomorrow He's to be discharged. . . . They continue to weed the House to their Fansey, and we are to hear but five more Elections this Session."

Ralph Verney has returned home, believing his father to be better, but Lady Fermanagh writes to him that his father is now taken with

27 May
1715.

"such pains all over a Like, that he is not able to stir himself—it is not fixed as it uses to be in his side, but hangs a neck and shoulders, which makes it intolerable troublesome to him, and I think poor Gentleman he indures A Bundance. I was in hopes my Lord would have been able to go to town with Mistress Verney and myself, but he might be much better before he can undertake such a Journey, so wish he may be better again as sudden as it was now for the worse."

28 May
1715.

Margaret Adams to Lord Fermanagh

"... The Leicestershire Knight is really I believe more fatigued with his attendance in town than the Election in the Country gave him, and is not very well now, but was let blood and I hope will take Epsom waters a few days. I heard him talk of sending your Lordship a copy of the reprimand the Speaker gave the Sheriff, which is handsome. Your Sonn is full of finery this day for the Court, but having no hopes of a place; I am resolved not to goe to Court and soe shall see none of the Raree Show, except the Captain's Lady's Brr., who came thither nicely equipt for that purpose."

4 June
1715.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—Last night I had the favour of yours, and I must own if the Non performance of manuscripts reach't Stanford, my faith would approve extream hard, for as yet I have not escap't one post, tho' it sometimes prevented me of a sweet Slumber in the Morn. The power of the Sheriff in returning a Jury is what retards a little our proceedings, and make us not fond of a Tryall before next Lent Assizes; however We shall soon forward the Execution of our Special Writts, for we have good reason to apprehend that the Rogue will make A Composition with us after he has found

our Resolutions of Prosecuting him. The Widdow [Mrs. Packe] certainly changes her expressions with the Climates, and I'm convinc't of it by the retrogression of her Loquacity. She often urges her obligations to the Duke, the Lord, the Judg, and she might as well have said the Devill too, who is as Faithfull a Servant as the foregoing Gentlemen, to whom she is probably the only debtor for Civillity; when She was in town, no body ask't so pressingly for my forgiving her—which supplication infallibly indicates some errour on the Lady's side, and indeed I hope I explained it rightly to her, by alledging that if her debt was so excessive it was certainly wrong to indulge me at first with such hopes of her assistance, which are to be produced in black and white. Mrs. Barrowdell was witness to a present Conference between Us, tho' the Widdow condescended to come to me thro' my refusall to ascend to her apartment.

My Lord, I suppose Cox sends you the votes by which you'll see the Day of Judgmt. appointed, and the high displeasure the Absent will incurr. I'm well satisfy'd of your incapacity of attending the constant service of the House, as likewise the insufficiency of my making any passable excuse for your Lordship; and I'm sure there are too many malignant Members in the House, whose minds and bodyes are much lamer than yours—Indeed the inveteracy of the party is such that I must wish a Publick Spirit in all our honest Members, to prevent this Capitall Diminution of some great Innocents; Your stay need not be long.

On Wednesday last Sister Cave went for Stanford, to which place my mind is frequently Erratick. You'll see a fair pretence made of the abuses in cloathing the Guards, and his Grace is obliged to rectify what he can't help, for 30 or 40 threw their shirts into the privy Garden.

I wish the rankness of our Common House woud be as purged, but of that little hopes are left; Mundays, Wensdays and Frydays are constant days of Execution inter borows; Next to my Duty and Service . . . nothing can so opportunely conclude as—*A Malis libera Nos Domine.*"

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

4 June
1715.

"I was surprised last night with an unexpected visit from Mr. Vickers, who came from St. Albans, that 'twas ten at night he came here, so he was content with a short commons and haste to take rest. . . . Master Lovett was left sick at school two dayes after the rest, but I fetcht him home a Monday in the Coach, and he has bin perfectly well and drinks asses milk and I hope he'll have no relapse. . . . I have had some Sickness amongst the servants and bury'd our old Cook with a mortification which was a great sur-

prise to me, thinking him in no danger till past hopes of recovery. The Trade of Elections are still Buzzing in our ears, the choice of Northampton is coming on, where is great Strife between Mr. Wilmore and Mr. Robinson, which last would certainly carry it were it not for the powerfull perswasive of Gold, which the new Lord H—x. [Halifax] and that party tempt the poor voters with, but I hope honesty will overpower it there."

9 June
1715.

Mrs. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

"My Dear Lord,—. . . Wherever I go my harty prayers shall daily be put up for your health and your life, for should I outlive, mine would not bee so comfortable and Easey as now it is, tho' I thank God I have a very good husband, I thank You My Lord for your Favours to us both. . . . It was my Birthday and my Aunt says I am sixty, I thought I had wanted a Yere of it. . . . I did not hear from my Parson last post, but designe to send an Hugh and Crye after him this post to Lady Cave. Perhaps he'll come round by Claydon, your Lordship being there. The talke daily is of such sad times that is Comeing, that I am very uneasy and the common health that is drank is to the Royall Exchange. Wee here the D. of Or. is so ill that he was prayed for at Richmond Church; tomorrow being the tenth of Jne. the trained Bands are ordered to be Out, and a great Gard was here this day gon to keep peace at Westminster, on account of the Impeachment of 7 great ones . . . God grant my fears may prove groundless but I hear a rooo of my Oppinion. . . . Perhaps your sister will be buried by her Father, that will cost less money, tho' you ware much in the right of offering your vault. I'll pay the Civility of a six weeks mourning having it by me, and in respect whose wife she was. . . . Pray don't bigin your Lettrs. with Madam to mee, I'de rather you'd say Pen."

The lady for whom Pen is willing to wear such mourning as she had by her is the unfortunate Mary, widow of Edmund Verney, the heiress of East Claydon. An entry in the East Claydon Register of Burials records that she was "buried in Woolen, in the Abel family Vault," on June 7th, 1715.

6 June
1715.

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney

"I have just left your poor Aunt this morning in bed severely afflicted with the tooth-Ake. I am sorry your old favourite Mare has quite done, for to be in the country without a good horse must needs be very uncomfortable.

My Neighbour Corsellis is come home from your Election, but not without blows, his Bailif, Self, and Man, have all had a short drubbing, and I am very glad Mr. Harvey carried his point. . . .

On Thursday the Commrs. of Secrecy opened, tis generally believed that all the Late Ministry will be sent to the Tower. . . . Sir Thomas Cave tells me they have resolv'd to sue the Under-Sheriff for protracting the Polle. Sir Robt. Raymond was so very Generous to him, that he would not take a fee from him, and yet desir'd him to consult him in anything he could serve him at any time again. . . . Our young Rogue is as wild as a Buck and grows almost visibly. . . . Sir Tho. Dunk and my Lady have taken lodgings at the next house to us."

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

21 June
1715.

" . . . Smith returned hither from Oxford on Sunday about Midnight, and went for London on Monday morning. The Bishop [John Potter] is so Cross about St. Claydon living that I fear 'twill lapse before White can be qualified to the Bishop's liking, for he must go to Oxford for a Degree if the Convocation will grant it him. The Viccar of Swan Burn is dead, it is in the King's gift worth £70 per annum. . . . Verney Cave is here but talks of going away this afternoon. I am much as I was with the pain in my side and a shortness of breath, so that I am not able yet to take a London Journey, and the Coach and Horses being at London I can't go out an airing. Give my blessing to my two daughters and their five children."

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

25 June
1715.

"My Lord,—It's well known to your Honr. how many people Envy us the Happiness of your Countenance, and no doubt have imputed the giving away this Living as no small contempt to us. The Offer thereof upon that score would have been more acceptable than the Living, for those very reasons you gave in your last. Under my present Circumstances a small benefice would do me no kindness. When I can get a Good one Consistent with my presant Practice, I will thankfully accept it. In the meantime must be content with what I have.

All people are newsing of the Events of these Impeachments, and most pity the D. of Ormond. We had a talk tonight that the Highlanders in Scotland are in Armes, that the D. of Ormond was solicited to make his submission to the King to prevent the Impeachment, which he was resolved to do, but was dissuaded therefrom by a Kentish B.

A Thursday last Captain Ôgle and his lady dined in Covent Garden on some of your Country Venison, the Lady of the Feast declared if it was in her power she would give him a commission that moment. . . . I hear that the King is not in hast to sign the major's commission."

This refers to Verney Lloyd, whose prospects would not be the brighter for being one of Marlborough's Officers, but he did get his promotion.

11 June
1715.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"... Sir Arthur Owen knew that since the report is to be printed, that it might be sent all over the Kingdom which must spoil the sale of it. We cannot make any Conjecture how far they proceed with the Rest; but the Party is very insolent, and some throw money abt. to raise A Mobb for Em, and the Church footmen carried last night the Capt. of their Mushroom Mobb before A Justice, who as soon as he was told who set him to work released him; and last night Sir Tho. Cross was insulted in his Chair as he went home, and struck several times by Em, others had their glasses broke. The Committee are very hard at work in preparing their Articles against the two forementioned Lords. I heare Oxford is at the House of Lords this Day, notwithstanding this affair which I believe will be the worst bout he ever had, for with more warmth was nobody ever follow'd, if they meddled with none but these two I'me not of opinion to stay to defend Em, and were it not thro' so severe an indisposition I should think you happy in being absent, for the fatigue attended with perveseness makes it insufferable being here.

My Poor boy Verney designed your Lordship a visitt but whether he now'll be able to perform it I much doubt, he's much out of order by an heat in his blood, being broke out in his body and throat with his mouth in blisters, but they give me hopes he is better and in no danger. We were at first apprehensive of the Small Pox and Lady Denbigh was so kind to come over under those thoughts, to have carryed home my Sister Cave and my daughter. . . . The Whiggs have carryed it by bribery at Northampton, where I perceive there was warme doings; for young Mr. Stratford of Overton fought Captain Lile in Lumley's Regiment, and gave him two slight wounds in his side, receiving one small one himself in one finger and a Scratt about his throat; I'me glad Stratford did not wound him mortally, for his being an honest Tory would have bin called sufficient to have hanged him. The next day Mr. Wykes met Sir Robt. Haslerigg on the same errand, but were prevented by friends doing what the Hangman should do for the latter. I wish Wee are not all soon obliged to the same service in defence of our freeholds which may the Almighty prevent, that I may still quietly continue your Lordship's Obedt. Son and Servant, T. CAVE.

P.S. Tis said the Whigg Mobb had £50 given Em last night to eake their proceedings—some say too there was a project attempted to assassinate the D. of O. in his Coach, wherein was only

his Dutchess, to which three men in disguise came up—but not finding his Grace there went off.”

“My Lord,—Your observations on the Humours of this fickle place are both mournful and true, nor can other prospects of Joy be hop’d for till Verity shall have its due meritt, and every point turned in its own proper Channell. Yesterday it was moved to adjourn the orders of that day, so tis not improbable but it may be then forgott. . . . Some say the Lords will reject the Articles, which are not yet formed, however it was mov’d yesterday that Pryor should be more closely confined in expectation of forcing out some greater discovery than at present appears. I Last Night lay’d a bottle of red Port with Mr. Dan Baker, that the D. of Oxford did not run away, nor was beheaded if he stayed. They have dismiss’d Generall Webb from his Right and all other profitable posts, as he voted with the Toryes this Session. Tis expected the same honourable notice will be taken of Generall Ross and all other Remnts., yet in being, I’m madd to hear some report his Majty. has not sent for O-d and told him he had been misrepresented to him, but his thoughts of his Grace were changed, and he should convince him of it soon; this is too good for truth. Mr. Denton our Kinsman, is I fear as thorough Stickt as the Worst, I am told these following Lords openly declare already against the Receiving of our Impeachments, viz. Dukes of Somerset, Devonsh., Rutland, and Lord Carlton, some assure me this morning that Oxford was seen to come out of the King’s Closett two days agon’. Mr. Palmes tells us Lord Wharton is excommunicated tis but what the whole tribe deserves. On Friday the French Schoolmaster received his whipping from Stocks Markett and dyed under the Correction, these Whig whippers were soe full of Lenity and Moderation. The Whigs daily purge the House of Honest Men, and you will find one made his last Speech this day. . . . Tis said Letchmere is made Attorney Genll. & Lawrence Carter of Leicester a Solr., and that Lord Stamford is to enter into Lord Abingdon’s place.”

“My Lord,—Your obliging acknowledgmt. is as agreable as mine cou’d be diverting to your Lordship, and tho’ I have now but little subjects (and that Melancholly too) I’ll committ to you while fresh. As on Tuesday we resumed the Report, wherein Stanhope with the utmost inveteracy open’s the Allegations against the good Duke, and was seconded with no less heat by Boscawen and their motion was for impeaching his Grace of high Treason, Genlls. Lumley and Ross spoke extreamly handsome in the Duke’s behalf, to ennumerate all of Em would swell this too much; yet I’ll say 19 brave men fac’d eloquently 8 of the reverse, Sir Jos. Jekyll was a Moderator towards Ormond, and divided with Us, but Mr. D-n unhappily attempted to seduce Us with his eloquence, and to lay

18 June
1715.

23 June
1715.

himself open was the deluded Consequence; when it was told the D. Ormond that his Impeachment was resolv'd on, he firmly reply'd—They have power and I have Innocence, and God's Will be done. Our division was Yeas 234; Noes 188, at eleaven at night. And Yesterday A-by began the desire of Impeaching Lord Sherrard, which was likewise resolved on; tis probable Shrewsbury has had his Quota of Envy, had not (as tis said) his Duchess stopt prosecution and says her King won't hurt her Duke. It seems they now stop further Impeaching, and some think this great fire will at last be smothered in its own smoake. I wish my Elder Brother was not troublesome to your Lordship, as I'm sure this excessive fatigue here is to me, and very much impairs my inward state by the Repetition of Heats and Colds, but I am now of opinion the Session may draw toward the conclusion by the motion of the Militia Bill, which generally is attended by our rising. I this day requested two or three Peers for a Chaplain's privilege for Mr. White, but to none effect, all being well full, that I could wish Mr. White without delay to become Mr. of Arts."

16 Aug.
1715.

Lord Fermanagh, from London, to Ralph Verney

"... Your Bror. Cave got to Stanford on Friday last and Lovetts on Saturday, and next Thursday Major Lloyd with his wife set out for Bristol and Ireland. . . . Noe neues in Towne, the Guns were fired today but 'twas on account of an Ambassodor's entry or audience. . . . I wish you Joy of your being in the New Lieutenancy, I am not."

22 July
1715.

A List of the Deputy-Lieutenants for the County of Bucks includes the names of the Hon. Ralph Verney and Samuel Tufnell.

13 Sept.
1715.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"Perceiving your Lordship's information of the Leicester abstract, I presume to give you a small account of that affair. They appointed me foreman of the Jury, and I concluded that all matters were in the Jury as mentioned, shou'd regularly be brought to the Jury, and as to the address I was informed that the High Sheriff had prepared one, and was assured 'twas handsome. . . . One of the Jury (an empty inveterate) told me the Sheriff desired him to show us an Address for our opinions, and I read it finding some incoherencies in it, I objected agt. 'Em, and told 'Em the language in Generall was not handsome and wish't Em to address in a more creditable style; some few of the Jury read it so it past off and no more said of it. I had indeed another drawn at the request of some

of our friends and on Monday morning asked the Sheriff's opinion of it, who objected to some paragraphs, which I showed him were more agreeable to the sense of our former Addresses, and as I had not changed my opinion, I should sign noe Cant. He sayd the D. of Rutland had seen his, and therefore We must have it, which I judg'd a warrant insufficient to pass off their insipid language; at our Town dinner his Eloquence was brought ready engrossed and I insisted on my former objections being amended, or I desired to be excused having any hand in itt; and after many had signed it, A Turbulent Spirited Whig urged me to give my reasons, pretending to enforce Me, yet I withstood all his threats and left 'Em for Another to take possession of Em. The Affair of Lutterworth Drunkard is unjustly laid on me singly, indeed the Bill was found against him, and the Evidences deposed that he was sadly drunk, and that he committed his Crime at the instigation of another, and as he had a Larg Family Mr. Byrd offered in the Jury's Chamber to acquaint the Judge that it was not his own voluntary action, and desired it might be mitigaged by a small fine, which accordingly he did, and I then seconded him; he was fined 20 marks, which he by some friend instantly borrowed. . . . Considering our Judg I believe 'twill be difficult to conceive my Interest sufficient to mitigate the Punishmt. of any Man in such a Crime. This is a true state of this great busle, which was occasioned by not being willing to undergo all their Impositions, besides the Sheriff had laisure enough to have given me his address himself, but God's Will be done and not theirs. . . . We have here my Mother and Brother Egerton, with his Wife, another Neighbour with his daughters and Mr. Shuttleworth with his family came last night to Lutterworth, we shall not soon want company, though at present I'm in want of both substance and Time to enlarg this further."

Sir Thomas Cave to Ralph Verney

24 Oct.
1715.

"Tis almost an Age I have been indebted to you but I was at the receipt of yours unresolved in my Civick measures, but am now fix't in the retaining of my own, or if that should remouve twill be into an entire desertion of those melodious Creatures. I find you have the honour to be continued in the Commission of Lieutenancy wherein I doubt not of your Justice in bringing Malecontents to their punishment, amongst whom I fear many of your Kennell have suffered Lamb-Misdemeanours, whereas mine have riotously devoured many Sheep thro' my being Cashiered from all Offices except a Puny Justice of Quorum; but if they continued that trade, I have bought two strapping Militia Gueldings with sumptuous accountrmts. that tis four to one I pounce Em—Ah hang it, Leave

thy Justice Trade, and come and hunt in my open Air, enjoying Dryden's Blessed Retirement—

Felix qui procul e negotiis
Paterna rura bobus exercet suis.

I am at a loss how to enlarg this as for news, Publick, there was never less, or more certain—for private mine lyes in Aegris per diem, in noctua in Cuniculo. Assuredly our parts are in the greatest quiet, and we enjoy the great Blessing of perfect Health, and our young Hopefull branches give us the promise of Farther satisfaction, and the Rugbeians are likewise healthy."

26 Oct.
1715.

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"Just before I received yours I had sent the Greyhound to Stony Stratford to be convey'd to you from thence, Everybody here being under dayly apprehension of being summon'd to Mount the Militia Horse, amongst whom I'm to make a topping figure, my Horses and accoutrements being very concise, and the Roags will to their smart feel the Edges of my broad swords, if they'll approach these Confines.

The Dog is very young and has seen but few Pussies, but I think he is quick full enough soon to go by some I have seen licking the Buckinghamshire Dripping-Panns. His name is Beau, born near Cumberland, now in Armes, and I doubt not of his having Appear'd a profess'd enemy to your Hares by this Time.

This day my Sister Cave leaves us for her little House at London, and we shall want her much, if she don't wish herself with us, for I believe the Town is yet Thinn of Company except Lawyers.

I fear Major Lloyd and his Lady have made the Sharks a meal, crossing the Herring-pool, for I can't find that anyone has heard from Em since they went to Bristol.

I hear the Militia of Lancashire was ordered forth and Two horsemen of our present Neighbour made all the Appearance, none other is more lucky for Widdows than ours, but sure the Teaguelander left his Lady very soon, and must repair his absence by A Speedy return. I think Lady Tyrrell has not siz'd hers well, for her Doctor is very thinn, but probably Active."

5 Nov.
1715.

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"I think no time can be more proper to Salute you with our Joyfull as well as Dutyfull Respects, than this Day which we celebrate with your health and hope we shall doe the same many years. . . . We have no Ball-ing or Coupleing in these parts, but we have had two large tables full to dinner with us, Lord Denbigh's family, Mrs.

Coles, Shuttleworths, etc., but our Diversions were divided, the Ladies at Cards, and Gentleman at the Bottle, both merry in their way and my Lord Very Cheerful, tho' upon the Brink of losing his Place and expects every day to see it in the Prints given to another, which he is assured will be, except he goes up, & complys (I believe) to measures he'l never budge for. Sister Cave has been in London this week, and hearkens the Beech jobbers much that it go on, and is the only Stock that keeps up, so I hope it will make us a cheerful countenance."

Sir Thomas Cave to Lord Fermanagh

12 Nov.
1715.

"... As your Lordship often speaks Ironically, so I suppose your opinion of the Series of my Studd to the Northumbrians, I fear such an Incursion into Bucks under the notion of amendment, by yours, would be setting one Tartar to catch another. We may justly suppose the Times boisterous when the Men of the Gown quitt the Rostrum for Red Coats, I must hope for the others having a Cornhill permission too; I confess the Papers of the Climate are more prompt to acceptance than Ours; where Commissns. go a-begging, till Taverners or Alemen Lodge them Agt. time of need. . . . I rejoice to hear Beau has recovered his Appetite, as he ate very little in these parts; as he is very young I wish him Speed and Stomach together. My thanks are due to the Poetry, tis as difficult to commend the Theses as the Exercise or Occasion of it. I confess our Climate is cold and dull, which late singularity sufficient for the appetites of both sexes. I have not yet heard from the Major since his Imbarkation, as his passage was long it must be tedious to his pinnace, I fear tis with him too, as with other Steermen, when the Stream draws hard it oft drives by force the Rudder from its station. I'm sorry for the loss of Cos. Humphrey, which I can't suppose of his Heir, tis a probability those may be happiest who depart before the approaching Tempests encrease, tho' that is not yet my Desire. Yesterday I had the luck to have a fine horse brought to me as a stray, that if your Lordship, Mr. Butterfield, or the new Militia officer, wants one, yee may have him at money's worth, if you apply quickly, for such horses go off again on the Appearance of the Militia's going out. Our orders are to be ready at an hour's notice, but I judg yours will have a little more time, and perhaps some of the Yong Officers will by mistake dress for an Opera and so make a farce of a Jack Boot. I verily believe my Troops will eat up three of the Bucks Officers at once, I'm collecting two others of the spawn of Guy of Warwick to accompany me. . . . My Cos. Walker has buried her son and I hear our Cousin Craddock is on his point of expiring, that your Lordship is happy in a family black Coat from Generation to Generation."

2 June
1716.

Sir T. Cave to Lord Fermanagh

"The week after I came down, our Rugbeians came home, amongst whom I dayly spend some time as I hope to their improvement. . . . Sure you'll have a good place at last as I have here to be Schoolmaster to three brave boys, who know more than myself. I have now too, a new preparation on foot, to rigg out a namesake of my family to serve King Georg at Northampton, and have sent to buy a pair of His Majesty's old Great top't boots, for such We are all to have, with white Laced hatts, and I unluckily bought yallow, but as tis not to be silver, my loss will not be great, for one of my maids will binde the bottom of her petticoat with it.

This nicety in our Officers makes me doubt your Honour's hat-crown passing muster, unless you get something more to boot. I believe the joy of the Warwickshire New Barronage will be solely confined within the Proprietors own Mansion, Who doubtless thinks that his carrying these Title with him to the Elysian Shades, all the Wonder of his parting with so much money without an Annuall Writt must be the more surprising. . . . I thought it might have been affected by Byrd's interest but he told me lately that he knew nothing of this Promotion. I expect my Militia man to be made a Lord, for he's a jolly honest fellow with more brains than the new Barronett, and is on the mending side too, his father being originally a Cave, and by trade a Cobbler, but had not leather enough by him to furnish a pair of boots with modernly Larg Topps, that I'me put on to hunt; I wish I could make him an acquisitive Commissioner of the forfeited estates, he must be well versed in such matters By his father's frequent forfeiting the payment of my yearly Rent.

We like our new lapidarian furniture, believing 'twill look very handsome when fixt up; but as to its intrinsick goodness We are ignoramus's, we wish it had deserved your accurate admiration and judgment. . . . If you take your leave of His Majesty before his departure for Hanover you may assure him of my best endeavours to keep this County in peace and quietness, for I hate fighting. We all here enjoy good health and the Younkers improve to our desires."

20 June
1716.

Lady Cave from Stanford to Lord F.

"I was very well pleased to receive your approbation of the marble chimney, knowing your judgment to be good, tis not yet fixt up waiting for workmen to do it. I had my neighbour Cole's company some time and carried her home to see her son and daughter Shuttleworth from London. Our time has been wholly employed in visiting and receiving them and the Newnham family here most days meeting, to drive on the old trade of Shuffling and

Cutting, dining and supping, and last night was farewell. . . . We are in expectation of great finery, two great Matches being on foot, between Sir William Boughton's son and Sir Robert Dashwood's Daughter with £8000 all agreed, and Tother is our new Baronet to a greater fortune, and only child of Mr. Whatcock in Warwickshire, but a citizen and trade formerly got his means to make so noble a purchase for his daughter. But it has been so long talked on I don't know whether it be certain. I'm sorry to hear my Sister Lovett's affair is not yet settled . . . our lads have been gone this ten days to school and performed bravely, the lasses too are all well."

Lady Cave to Lord Fermanagh

8 Aug.
1716.

" . . . The most Obedient Salutes of the whole Flock to you, which I may say is not in full here. Sister Lovett having not seen her sons so long had 'Em home last night, and with them beg'd a Play day or two for Verney, so they will return together in a few days, well I hope as they seem now. . . . My sister and I made Shift to cripple our Equipage in our way back from Sir Robert Clerke's where I went to fetch his second Daughter hether, our Wheel fired, and droped off a mile from home, upon which we took to our heels and made Shift to Stumble home by our Selves all most in the dark and left the Servants to assist the Crazy Carriage, which is so shattered that 'twould not be reached home that Night, but drop'd in the mid way, and doubt will be for ever useless, so we shall be forced to be greater housekeepers than usual."

Sir T. Cave to Lord Fermanagh

15 Oct.
1716.

"My Lord,—There is certainly a letterall debt between Us, and *Sur ma foy* I can't remember on which side it is, nor can I see the importance of finding out the enigma of silence; your Lordship is hereby tendered the most obsequious respects from me, incumbered with a miscellaney of varieties, as my Concern, for poor Verney's Eyes which we flatter ourselves are better, yet farr from well, and on Saturday last my Wife was seized with the same complaint in her Eyes, they are extream bad, that the Oculist have with us at present more employ than Corporeal Professors.

I have great hopes the Parliament will allow me a surfitt of hunting both Hares and Men, with the first I have great pleasure, but the last is an fatigue and Interruption, for on Mr. Breton's death becomes a vacancy of Verdurer in Rockingham Forrest, for which young Mr. Stratford (a very honest Gent of our side) stands Candidate, and is opposed by Captain Cockain, Uncle to the late Lord Cullein, supported by Lord Hallifax's purse, at Present a great Bugbear in Northmpts. where I think too many

Men's Hearts are fallen into their Breeches. We can't guess how this mighty Venison place will go, but tis made by Lord Hallifax a great party business, and he thretens to spend much money, but I fear he don't intend the County so much good, the day of electing this person is not yet known, everything of power being in the Whig's hands. I am glad to hear the Toryes were Masters at Bister, and was fair deal to be given it would be so everywhere. I must tell your Lordship of a Slippery trick play'd me lately by two Essex Sparks, which I had lately confined in my Kennell. They Both leaped over the Wall and fairly run home to Baddow; but I had imitated our secretaryses in Lord Duffus's case and sent a Warrant to the Claim of my prisoners, whose return I expect by the first load of calves bound for Smithefield."

26 Jan.
1717.

Sir T. Cave to Lord F.

"... Last Sunday our Chelsea Coach lugg'd throu the dirt to Northampton a large Composition of animals—Sister Lovett, Mrs. Iliff and Bob Lovett, with Shepheard—I hear they had good company in the Coach, as Sir Robt. of my own Kidney, which last no doubt pleased Mr. Lovett, Whom you'l find such a Tory, as I hope has no equall in Old England. Mr. Wyekes the Honest Membr. for North'ton has married a great Fortun, whose maiden name was Kenderick, nece of the Lady D'Anvers of Culworth; and we have lost Sir Edward Nichols by the Small pox, a great lamentation to all Virgin Ladies, whose hopes depended on him, while he was living. I suppose Brother Verney is still with you, to whom I wish my service acceptable, though the honour of seeing him here is what I presume not to expect. . . . I suppose he'l cull your Country of all the Hades. News to prolong this to my will would take up much time to invent, and without that there's none. I have lately recd. and returned many kind letters to Dr. Vickers, who has sent me fresh invitations to his chopp house. My wife has a little Cold, wich I am in hopes soon to kiss off."



Mary [Verney] Lovett.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE WIDOW AND THE LIGHTHOUSE

AFTER Colonel Lovett's death, Lord and Lady Fermanagh returned to Claydon. The business of the family had to be resumed, and Mary, at the age of 28, sheltered and cared for as she had always been, and looking forward to a quiet home life with her husband after their many separations, must face the world alone.

The spirit in which Colonel Lovett had carried on his work has been shown in his letters. He had naturally wished that a yearly income should accrue to his family, as interest for the large amount of capital he had sunk on the Eddystone Rock, but there was much more in it than this. His pride in his Lighthouse was like the love and pride which a sailor feels in his ship; he had many friends in the Royal Navy, and their sympathy and approbation were very dear to him; he had established friendly personal relations with the Trinity House and the various Merchant Shipping Companies concerned.

His sudden and unexplained death left a widowed lighthouse, as well as a desolate widow. All the romance and public spirit had gone out of it, and Mary was overwhelmed with a crushing load of business and a mob of clamorous creditors. She kept her head, and was resolved to do her best for their children; she was not at first anxious, knowing that her husband had paid up his liabilities; but as the months and years went on, the law's delays were eating up all the money she could immediately command. Colonel Lovett left her as executor with Mr. Richard Tighe, who was his nephew and a true friend.

The Lovett interests were divided in a complicated fashion between their original home in the county of Bucks and their very honourable position in Dublin. Christopher Lovett, the third son of Sir Robert Lovett, Kt. of Liscombe House, had gone to Turkey as a lad with a company of merchant venturers. At the time of the

Stuart Restoration, he was settled on the Blind Key in Dublin as a linen merchant and a citizen of distinction. When he died, in 1691, his eldest son, Christopher, inherited the Buckinghamshire Estates, and his second son, John, was a man of public affairs in Dublin, and, at the same time, he kept up his interest in the old county as an officer of the Bucks Militia. He married, first, his cousin, Susannah, daughter of his father's younger brother, Lawrence, who resided in Bucks, but not at Liscombe. By her he had two sons, Robert and Christopher, and a daughter, Fanny; other baby boys had died in infancy.

When he was courting Mary Verney, in 1702 and 1703, he was spoken of, by those who opposed the marriage, as if he had been a complete stranger "of Iorland". Everything Irish was regarded with great suspicion, but it was inexcusable in this case, as Colonel Lovett belonged to a family so well known in their own neighbourhood. Probably the fact that Liscombe House was not inhabited by the family at that moment made the Lovetts seem more remote.

Colonel John Lovett was said to have been much trusted by the English Government in all Irish affairs, but his early death brought his interest to an end.

He lived in Clancarty House at Dublin, which was directly opposite the Parliament House. One night, while he was a Member, he was returning home and saw something glittering on the ground, and stooping to see what it was found it was his own ring which he must have dropped as he was going in, but which he had not missed. The ring remained in his family.

After Lord and Lady Fermanagh had got back to Claydon, Mary wrote once more to her father:

9 May
1710.

"Hond. Sir,—Your unfortunate daughter begs leave to express her Duty as well as sence of all kindnesse showed to me in my great necessity, for I hope God will preserve you to be a Father to the poor Fatherless and Husband to the Widdow, which I hope will always be a Widdow indeed, and stand by the remains of that Dear Man, whose Memorye shall ever be graven in my heart."

11 May
1710.

Two days later, Mary sends her father copies of letters from Mr. Tighe to Mr. Jess and Mr. Rudyerd. The latter is asking for more money—Mr. Tighe is very apprehensive that the affairs of the Lighthouse will prove extremely intricate, "but I am resolved to doe the best I can to serve the family of the man that I had soe perfect an esteem and value for". Mary entreats her father to direct

her what to do; writing "past eleven at night", she assures him that "I have not one friend now in this world whose advice I would give A Pin for but yours; & this is a thing of soe great moment that I hope you will think my poor family worth a little of your care, tomorrow or next day at furthest we expect the will".

Her father was prompt to respond:

"I recd. yours last night from Aylesbury, and by what I see of Mr. Tighe's letter to Mr. Rudyard and Mr. Jess, your nephew has proved the will of which you expect a Coppy, when you must carry it to some good Councell and be advised by him, for I am not capable of advising in matters of Law. I perceive also that Mr. Tighe reckons upon your administering because he desires you to send a Letter of Attorney if you don't come quickly into Ireland, and I would not have you disoblige Mr. Tighe, but however I would that you should heare what good Councell says to it. There will be trouble in it, but there is no business to be done without trouble, and you can't bear it better then for that good husband of yours and his Children. . . . I know not whom you will take with you to Councell, your Brother, and Uncle Palmer if this last be not too scrupulous, or any body else that you think fit, nor do I knowe what Councell to recommend you to. I know the Colonel consulted Sir Edw. Northey, but I am not acquainted with him tho' Brother Luttrell is. If their be no execrs. but you and Mr. Tighe, then if you lay all the burden upon him it may displease him, and then besides it would be out of your power to serve yourself and your own Children too. All this you must weigh and consider of very well, and God direct you for the best. Your affectionate father, F."

14 May
1710.

The Will, which Mary Lovett had some delay in obtaining, is a characteristic example of the lengthy and complicated legal documents of the time. Mr. Alfred Sotheby of Somerset House, who has kindly looked it up, describes it as consisting of 20 folio pages, hard to read and to decipher, the reference number being "Lovett, John. Sept. 1710. Ref. book 'Smith'—181."

Lord Fermanagh begs his daughter to return to Dublin, and not to put too much trouble on her co-executor. She has a long and tedious journey.

"A fortnight's stay at Park Gate, and four days being at sea. . . . My Cousen Tighe is and has been extream kind to me. After we had both administered we design next week to goe and see my poor children. Verney is still a sweet child and very good, I have not yet said anything about my plate and goods, but will take care of them as soon as I can with handsomeness. I am glad my Sister came not

1 July
1710.

with me for I have had a very tiresome Journey which I should have been troubled for her to have undergone on my account, but I was born to bear. . . . My blessing to Betty."

6 July
1710.

" . . . Mr. Tighe and I have this day taken out Letters of Administration, and I hope in God in time we shall make the family easy. . . . Mr. Tighe has stood tightly to it, otherwise the Plate and everything else had been gone. . . . I find I should have been tore all in peaces if Mr. Tighe had not stood with me but he is a true friend and a man of much honour . . . he was resolved not to administer till I gave my consent to sell or Sett the Lighthouse . . . he is averse to Mr. Rudyard's having anything to do with the Lighthouse, or anything, he fearing that he has got too much already, for they all believe here that a much less sum of money would have built it if well managed. We cannot get any money here from the ships, till we have an exemplification of the Act of Parliament from England under the Broad Seal, which we have sent for; it is only their Durty cunning to put us to what charge they can. I thank God my Dear Mr. Lovett's memory bears a great Carrecter here, even amongst his very Enimyes, which indeed occasion much kindness and Civility and Respect to be shown to me from everybody, and doubt not but God will bring me through all my troubles save the loss of that just and good man which is never to be forgotten. . . . Mr. Rudyard has writ to us for more money and power to call the Collrs. to an account which Mr. Tighe will not give . . . first I think it best to pay every one what is due to them but I have found he [Mr. Rudyerd] is for gratifying all his people never considering what we have to pay. Tomorrow we all desine for Kiltrudery to see my poor children and how matters stand there."

This summer came the break up of Lady Fermanagh's home, with the death of Mrs. Baker of Penn.

23 July
1710.

Lord Fermanagh to Mary Lovett

"I have of late been harrast about from place to place, as at Pen to see my Mother Baker, then to the Sessions, & lastly to the Assizes, where my particular Affairs Ingaged me 2 or 3 dayes, that I have not been at leisure to tell you with what satisfaction I read of your safe arrivall at Dublin after a very fatiguing Voyage and Journey . . . & of Mr. Tighe's good will towards you & of the whole family of Lovetts.

As to Mr. R. [Rudyerd] tis too soon yet to discover my thoughts of him, but its my opinion that he has gott more by Col. Lovett then he gott in 30 yeares tradeing, yet I see the meanness of his Spiritt extends still to getting if it be but trifles in comparision of what he hath gott from that Good man. And tho' he might, I believe, yet

be made use of, I would put as little power into his hands as possible, especially of money concerns, the Lighthouse affaires excepted, & I doubt he is not capacited to Inspect other men's Accounts. But these matters I knowe Mr. Tighe's more mature Judgment will well consider & act for the best. I am very glad the Creditors seem so easy, & I dare say there will be such a just performance of the Trust, by honest Mr. Lovett's Exrs. that they will be fully satisfied with Mr. Tighe & your Integrity. As to the Lighthouse . . . I much doubt whether it will at long run answer the End by keeping, God onely knows, yet with Peace & his blessing that may happen; but for my part I wish your husbd. had never undertaken it . . . & whether Sell, Sett, or Kept, God direct you both for the best. . . I wish Ld. Wharton liked Kilrudery so well that he'd buy it, but it seems you have small hopes of selling it [the lease] to advantage . . . this is a frightful long letter, therefore Ile conclude praying for you & your small frye."

It must have been bitter to the widow, when Colonel Lovett had been so applauded for his public work, and for the benefit the Eddystone Lighthouse was to be to the nation, that her relations, and even her father, should wish he had never undertaken it. "The precious Lighthouse" and "This enchanting Lighthouse" had come to be by-words in the family.

Mary Lovett to Lord Fermanagh

6 Sept.
1710.

"My thoughts of being in England by this time made me defer giving you thanks for the favour of yours long before now, but I find its very tedious to undertake anything when one depends on other people. . . Mr. Rudyard has finished all and left Plimouth. . . I fear we shall find Malloncolly accounts there as well as here for all people brings in their debts. . . I have had all the goods of both houses and plate valued by sworn Appraisers, and their value of them comes to above 600 pounds. We have entered Bob Lovett in the Coledge, and Kit we have got a very good Master for at Cork, he is the greatest merchant there. Poor Verney is not well with a violent cough, Jack is very well, and with his nurse, where I think to let him be, till I have some place of settlemt. for them, for it be very troublesome to remove Children from place to place. I am very much obleiged to you and my Mother for desiring them, but while I live in this world I will be as little troublesome in it as I can, and I am sencible Children are very much so, but mine shall be as little as they can. I hope to see you and my mother this winter at London, if it was not for the thought of that, my going there would be insupportable."

Having spent some arduous months in Ireland, business called her to London, and she took Verney Lovett with her, but the troubles of the journey were not over with the crossing of the Irish Channel, as Mary's letter, from London, shows.

11 Nov.
1710.

"The morning we left Northampton the Coach was overturned two hours before day, which frightened me extremely for my poor little boy's sake, but I thank God we were none of us hurt though there was Six in the Coach besides him, indeed it was a great mercy, for it went over in a sad place. . . . I had the good fortune to see my brother and sister Verney and Sir Thomas and Sister Cave, who all met me at Creek."

In November 1710 Mary has reached London, and is anxious about her eldest boy Verney, who has had a severe attack of fever.

18 Nov.
1710.

"Dr. Chamberlain has taken very great care of him; today he says he believes he need do no more to him. He has been up this afternoon & eat a Whiteing to his Diner."

He was not a strong child, but of a very winning disposition. Little John had been left with Nurse Sheppard at Kilruddery, and "Besse" was quite a child of the house at Claydon.

The lawyers in the family were anxious to have a hand in the complicated legal proceedings which involved the Trinity House, the Court of Chancery, and even the House of Commons.

9 Dec.
1710.

Ralph Palmer, at Chelsea, to Ralph Verney

". . . I know nothing how your Sister Lovett's matters goe, for she has taken no notice of 'Em to me, though I have been frequently with her. My Lord has given her up all the Writings which I think he did not doe well with, since Shee has taken the executorship upon her; for if she should marry again and has all the writings in her possession, I cannot see what can be done, tho' I hope Shee never will. . . . There is the Mortgage of the Lighthouse to us, and the Bonds that was advised to be sued by this means in the Executor's hands, who are to make 'Em good, but this Inter Nos, I shall mention it to None Else."

Mary Lovett's stay in London this Christmas was a great pleasure to Aunt Adams, and to the numerous cousins; she seems to have lodged in the same house in Covent Garden with the old Lady. She writes to her father:

26 Dec.
1710.

". . . We have had no fortune in the Lottery but it is gone where it is more wanted, for the people gave my Aunt Adams one Ticket

and it is come up a prize, of A Silver Skillett weighing 26 ounces. She has got it home and wonders that its possible any good fortune should come to her. . . . Verney is standing by me and presents his duty to you."

If Mary Lovett had no home of her own, she was eagerly welcomed at all the family houses. She writes to Ralph from Stanford:

"Deare Brother,—I deferred my thanks for the favour of yours till I could give you the account of our Knights of the Shires being ^{5 May 1712.} come up to the service of their Country. My Lord left Claydon yesterday morning and was here very brisk at night. . . . My Mother he says will be here soon. Sir Thomas rid post from Daventry and was here by five o'clock, and all the way upon one horse, so I believe he had his pennyworths out of him."

Lady Fermanagh had infinite sympathy with Mary and urges her husband to do his best for her.

". . . I hope in God Mr. Tigh and you will make haste to gitt ^{6 May 1712.} Mrs. Lovett's writings don to all our great sattisfaction. I would that it did but lie in my power to make her Easey and Happy."

Mr. R. J. Best, Librarian of the National Library of Ireland, has kindly communicated the following information:

"A few months ago we acquired an interesting document: 'An Act to enable Trustees to make Building Leases of part of the estate, late of John Lovett, Deceas'd, lying in the City of Dublin'. No date, c. 1711.

Particulars of his Marriage Settlement on Mary Verney, dau. of Viscount Fermanagh, are given. It is a printed folio of three pages."

Mary Lovett to Lord Fermanagh

^{28 May 1713.}

"The copy of what Mr. Weston writ to me. The bill in Chancery for sale of the Light house must be brought in the names of some of the mortgagees against the executors of Coll. Lovett and his son Verney, and if my trustees haveing the first morgage wou'd be plantives with the other mortgagees it wou'd be more easie and less expensive then to be defendants, and save them the trouble of putting in answers.

Therefore says he, if you please to write to Mr. Palmer about this matter I will attend him and know his pleasure and take his directions and proceed accordingly."

Mr. Palmer writes about Mary Lovett's business; both he and ^{2 June 1713.} Mr. Luttrell expected that an Act of Parliament should be obtained

for the sale of Colonel Lovett's estates. Now it is proposed that the sale of the lighthouse should be by decree in Chancery, which Mr. Palmer thinks will be slower and more expensive than an Act of Parliament.

1713. Bob Lovett has apparently spent his holidays at hospitable Stanford and sends his thanks very shortly: "Lest my melancholy should take thoughts of its own offspring."

10 Aug.
1713.

Mary Lovett, at Stanford, to Lord Fermanagh

"... I come very well to this place; my Sister met me at Creak in her Coach; we were very good company in the Coach from London, the most Irish, the Bishop of Clogher, who is a very ingenious man and his son too, and indeed they were mighty civil and complisant to me. I desine now as soon as it is convenient for my Sister to goe with me to carry Verney to School. The roads were as bad as if it were the midle of Winter, which made us often in danger of being overturned. ... The very Coach that went down before us was robbed."

23 Aug.
1713.

"Dear Brother," Mary writes, "I return you many thanks for your kind letter. ... I stayed till I could give you the account of my disposing of Verney to school. We all went with him to Rugby and he seem'd mighty well pleased, but I believe he will find A great alteration; however I believe he will be taken A great deal of care of, which is all the satisfaction I can have in him now. Master Cave, who is indeed A very fine Boy was mighty glad to see him, so I hope they'l both doe very well, for the school has A mighty good fame. . . Sir Thomas thought of meeting you at Claydon, if his own election be over. We are as quiet here as if there were no such affair in hand, for the Whigs doe not so much as look at us. I wish it were the same with all our friends; I believe you'l have a very tiresome time at Claydon, but if it's crown'd with victory all's well. I have some small fancy we shall see your name in the list amongst the next members; if it be what you approve of, I heartily wish it. ... I hear my Father has invited Mr. Tighe down for the Election."

27 Oct.
1713.

"... I wish I could say as many pleasant things from these parts as you are pleased to entertain us with, but I think Stanford a very dull place for news."

Mary Lovett was much blessed in her children; her only anxiety about the two eldest concerned their health. Besse, whom her father had been so anxious to decorate with a pearl necklace, suffered from a swollen and painful neck, a great trouble to Lady

Fermanagh who had made her so much at home at Claydon. Verney Lovett was specially welcomed at Stanford. Verney Cave, the eldest son of the house, went to Rugby School on January 19, 1713; and his cousin, Verney Lovett, joined him in August of the same year; they were extremely happy there, and each was followed by a younger brother. Mr. W. W. Vaughan, the present Headmaster, has been good enough to furnish the following particulars of the school at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and of the dates of the boys' admissions:

"When these boys were at Rugby, the School (the original School built by the Trustees of the Founder, Lawrence Sheriff) stood opposite the Parish Church. It was a very unpretentious building, capable of accommodating not more than about 70 boys, and in all probability during the time they were members of the School the buildings were in a dilapidated condition. They had existed since 1572, and were in such a ruinous state when a move was made in 1750 to the present position, that they were immediately pulled down. The Headmaster was Dr. Henry Holyoake, who, appointed in 1688, held the post till 1731. He was a man of great ability, and the Trustees acknowledged that he 'recovered the credit and reputation of the School'."

In November 1713, a family party went over from Stanford to visit the schoolboys, "and the Master says they does very well".

During the years 1714 and 1715 Mary Lovett stayed a great deal with her kind sister and brother-in-law at Stanford. She had been ill, and writes gratefully that her sister

"has been extreem kind in nursing me up with good things. . . . I had a mighty kind letter from my brother Ned Lovett who has taken my little Boy to his house till Sheppheard [his nurse] is ready to bring him over, and he commends him mightily for a good tempered Child but much unpolished. . . . My Sister and the young Fry joyn in humble duty to you." 25 Feb. 1714.

Lady Cave writes to her father "from a full House of Good Company; we are now dwindled to only my Sister Lovett and I, and how this Solitary life will agree with us I can't tell". 10 Feb. 1714.

She writes again in April, much concerned to hear that her father has been ill.

"No one being without great Colds and bad Coughs, with which I am now much troubled. Our two Gentlemen have been gone this week and I fear more of my company will follow them; my Sister 17 Apr. 1714.

being inform'd her coming up is necessary about her Chancery affair, which I wish her successfully to end and return agen soon."

Mary was debating with herself whether to put Besse under Mr. Vickers' care, who had so much confidence in his own powers as a healer. Sir Thomas Cave, who had never believed in him, had written previously to Lord Fermanagh:

3 Mar.
1713.

"... I had this day with me one of Vickers' patients of a year's standing, whom he says he has done good to in her body, but can't cure her face. Yet he sends her to be toucht; and I feare in a little time his honesty will be so well known that all his Chapps will come to the Queen."

Mary inclined to the same opinion, but it was not easy to "Come to the Queen".

8 Mar.
1714.

Mary Lovett to Lord Fermanagh

"I beg leave to offer my most grateful acknowledgments for your long continued kindness and tender regard for my poor Child. The trouble she has given you, Sir, and my Mother, has not been the least of my concern, and as I have now disposed of both my boys to school, I am in A manner at liberty for her service. . . ."

15 May
1714.

"... I showed my poor Girl to a famous surgeon, one Blundell, who assures me it is the Evill, and told me all that had been done to her and all that I can do for her signifies nothing; he sayd shes young and will outgrow it, but he would by no means have me tamper with her nor give her any more Physick, for that he says she has had too much already, which he fears has made her Consumtive; she must intirely leave off malt drink and wine, and he bid me get her toucht, which I fear I have not at this time intrest enough to doe, for the Queen disorders herself by preparing herself to touch, that noe one about her cares she should doe it; for she fasts the day before and abstains severall days, which they think does her hurt. I have also showed Betty to Mr. Williams, the Surgeon, and he says the very same thing as Mr. Blundell, but they bid me leave off her plasters and all medicines, but they cut her an Issue in her arm. . . . Verney goes down A Monday with Mr. Pryor in the Northampton Coach, because I would have him lose no time at his book. I should think it A Happiness if I get them both well out of this infectious place. . . . Last night I was at A Committy of the House of Commons, where I had the assistance of Mr. Fleetwood's hand, tho' he did not know me till afterwards; Mr. Tighe told him who I was; Mr. Herbert allso set very near me, the business was the Shresbury Election, but we did not stay to hear it ended."

"... I am to the highest degree obliged for the very kind offer of your supply to me of money in this expensive place. I am at a loss how to express my sense of such a kindness and favour, but I will always take care to bring my Expences as near as I can to what I can scabble up of my own, that I may not be A Trouble to my Friends where I would be A comfort. I thank God I don't owe five pounds in the world, and I believe I have money enough to supply my occasions whilst I stay in town. 20 May
1714.

As to the child, . . . If she is toucht nothing must be done for her after it, and I have great hopes the Queen will touch her. Lady Denbigh has been so kind to speak for me to the Queen, and there is Intrest making for another young lady to be touched, so we hope they will both be done together. The Queen's answer was she could not doe it this week, but Lady Denbigh will goe to her again, indeed she runs about to all the Bed Chamber Ladyes and does all the possible for me, and will goe with the child herself to the Queen. So every body says as long as I have hopes of getting her toucht I must doe nothing else with her. Otherwise I would have had Viccars undertaken her, tho' at present I hear his fame much cryed down, but in this case I should be willing to try all means. Here is some that I know in town, who the Queen toucht last year that had severall sores on them, but are now as well as I am. Pray God grant the like effect on my poor Bess. Mrs. Cave has made me a very kind offer that if I cannot get her toucht now at any time when it can be done if she is sent up to her she shall be wellcome, which I think a particular obligation from so remote A person. I hope you'l pardon this long account but truly my head and heart is full of her."

Betty writes her own acknowledgements in a childish hand on ruled paper:

"Honrd. Sir,—I was mightily pleased with your kind letter. . . . My Mama desires if it had not been for me to a been in the Contrey before now, my Mama carried me by water to Chelsey, who are all well there, my Grandfather was so kind as to give me a gunie. My Mama commands me to give her Duty to you, and pray except of the same from, Sir, your obedient Granddaughter to command, 22 May
1714.
E. LOVETT."

Mr. Palmer, her generous great-grandfather and god-father, died the next spring.

Little Bess had evidently been touched by Queen Anne, as her mother refers to the "Touch-piece of gold", called an "Angel", with the figure of St. George overcoming the Dragon, that was hung by a white ribbon round the patient's neck.

When she returned to Aunt Adams' rooms, her relations crowded

round her to talk to the child, who, like the pussy-cat in the nursery rhyme, had come up "To London to see the fine Queen". How pleasant it would have been to have heard her childish impressions, but not everyone shared the mother's mood of deep thankfulness. There is an odd story of Mr. Vickers taking offence, as he easily did, told by Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney:

1714.

"... When Miss Lovett came home we were all at Mrs. Adams' with my Lord, and We all got about her, and Mr. Vickers was there but stood behind us, and We were so busy in asking the Child questions that we did not see him, which put him into such a passion that he flew out of the room with great resentment, and he fell upon Niece Lovett in the other room so like a pragmatistical Cox comb, that I double rejoice he is not benefited at Steep. Claydon, for he would be I fear a very troublesome neighbour to you. I pray God keep him from Mid. Claydon, if that should drop in my Lord's time."

Besse was old enough to remember all her life Queen Anne's kindness to her and the other little girl presented by Lady Denbigh in May 1714. It may well have been one of the last occasions when the Queen made the effort to exercise a power which was with her a serious religious ceremony. That spring the Queen was reported to be wonderfully well, till her health suddenly failed, and she died little more than two months afterwards.

29 May
1714.

Mary Lovett to Lord Fermanagh

"I this morning set forward Dear little Bess for Claydon where I hope she is safe arrived before this, and I pray God the means that has been used for her may prove effectually. She must take care of her Gold and wear it about her neck both night and day, and rub the place that swell'd with it every morning. . . . There is great talk that all the Parliament men are to be sent for up, but I don't hear the Cause. I think to move towards Stanford where I hope soon to see my little Irish Boy."

25 June
1714.

"... Poor Verney has had a sad Cough and looks ill; I am going to send an ass to Rugby for him to drink the milk. We hear from Claydon that my brother Pearce is dead but by letter from Ireland I hear he is in good health and just gone out of town to Kilkenny. . . . I believe he's dead in law only but that may make it convenient to give out such a report. I will not put myself in any mourning till I am more assured there is occasion." (From Stanford.)

3 May
1714.

"There is a petition from the Master and Wardens of Trinity House against a Bill to erect two Lights at the Land's End. . .

It will be thus disadvantageous to our Lighthouse to have more of them set up, so hope you'll oppose it if you find it so. I hope you'll be pleased to speak to the Members you know to oppose this Lights Bill for I am very sure it's noe good to us. I wish I had been so happy to see you in town but fate always crosses my desires, and I must run with patience my Race though indeed it is very hard. Sir Thomas and my sister are so kind to lend me an Ass which is this day sent to Rugby for Verney to drink the milk, and if that does not doe him good God knows what will. He looks very ill and complains much of a pain in his side. I don't know what to doe with him for he must follow his schooling and I fear his constitution won't bear that."

There is great rejoicing when the child returns to Claydon, and Lady Fermanagh writes: "To-day is little Bessie's birthday, and the servants are ringing a peale on that occasion." She was ten years old.

Mary Lovett to Lord Fermanagh

2 Oct.
1714.

"... The two boys are now here from Rugby [Verney Cave and Verney Lovett], it being Lutterworth Horse Race. Jackie is, I thank God, a Lusty Boy, and truly his behaviours is better than could be expected considering his being so remote from anything that was genteel; his speech indeed is Broken but I hope in time it will ware off. ..."

"Since Sir Thomas Cave left us we have took a short Ramble with Lady Denbigh to a great Ball at Coventry, wher there was a great deal of good company; five of my Lady's children were dancers, and likewise Master Cave, who I may say was the top; the Ball was made by the Master that teaches them all to dance, and indeed 'twas A very good one. After all his scholars had done, Lady Denbigh, we and some more, began and danced till 5 in the morning; the next day we were all invited to A Gentleman's House in the town and last night we all came home. My Sister and I went in Lady Denbigh's Coach, for her's was full of the young Fry. I thank God ours are well, tho' Verney has had a return of his old complaint; Jack is better able to bear the hardships of the school, and indeed it's time he was put. I have heard some say it's not good to put two brothers to one place, which others contradict, so what to do I don't know. As I am so unfortunate not to have a settled home of my own, it's most convenient to me, and less troublesome to my friends, to have them at one place, but if their good comes in any Competition with my conveniency to be sure I give it up. The children I think are both very well tempered and seem inclined to be very fond of each other. I should be mightyly satisfied could I obtain your judgment what to do."

27 Nov.
1714.

*Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney*21 Dec.
1714.

"... I had a letter lately from your Sister Lovett. Mr. Tighe is going for Ireland soe all the business will fall upon her here. He will reduce himself to £300 p. an. rather than there be worry'd, as he is he says, for his Uncle's debts. She says Bob Lovett is of age now something surely should be done with that estate for her £6000. She desires me to inspect Mr. Noyes his Accounts, which I am very ready to do for her or anything that I am able. I hope in a little time there will be a Decree for selling this (inchanting) Lighthouse. She has been paid all of that Interest to Midsummer. I hope she gives you sometime an account of her affairs which I think in duty and affection she ought to doe, as well in prudence and comfort to herself. Her eldest boy she says is very puiny; they are both at school together.

The little Knight is as busy as a Bee, he has two powerful adversares, the D. of Rutland and Lord Harborough, I am sorry for his Expenses, in my private thoughts he had better never had stood, but——. I hear there has been a Computation of the Annual Amount of the Sallarys of the City List, which comes to 900,000 pounds a yeare. This the Ct. is resolved to reduce to 6, so tho' many have got places, they will lose a good slice of their revenues."

1714. Little Ralph Palmer "holds mighty well, and is very full of his little cousins . . . and often in Stories which he is wonderful fond of, and is much pleased with exploits along with his Cousin Jack at Baddow.

My Father has had no return of his Fits, he is much as he used to be only more forgetfull and melancholy."

Bess Lovett writes from Stanford to her Grandfather at Claydon:

17 Jan.
1715.

"My Brothers went to Schol last Monday and they had all got their tasks which made them very glad to go. Here is no news that is worth sending your Lordship word of, so with humble duty to my Lady and humble service to my Aunt and Cousin is all from, Honoured Sir, your obedient granddaughter."

20 Jan.
1715.*Mary Lovett, in London, to Ralph Verney*

"... I was in hopes before now to have sent you some good news about the Lighthouse, but nothing I think has stired in it since my last. I must prove the transferring my Four Thousand to Mr. Lovett which by Mr. Bernard's interest with the Directors of the East India Company and his great industry we are ready to do. . . . When I heard from Stanford they were all well and Betty's neck much as it used to be."

Mary's stepsons seem to do credit to their father; Kit Lovett turns up at Stanford in the spring of 1715, "A pretty sober youth, his master gives him A mighty Character".

Verney Cave has been on a visit to Claydon. His mother writes:

"The young Traveller returned safe home very much delighted and proud of your kindness and favours to him. He wanted no inclination to have made you a longer visit but through sickness etc, his time and pleasure was near expired, and I really feared such a schoolboy's company would be troublesome to you. He desires I'de add his thanks to mine for your late extraordinary kindness to him; Master Lovett and he went both very well to school, Tommy and Penny have both had the distemper that Verney had, but are well again."

The "distemper" was called "swine-pox".

Mary Lovett to Lord Fermanagh

16 July
1715.

"I hope to have told you something of my fate with the Corporation, but they keep me still depending. Mr Noyes gives me all the assurance in the world it will be done at the next Court but for my part I see so many tricks and turnes in the world that I only depend upon what I see done and now not what people say. When I told him he should have the present Mr. Bernard intimated to him, it put A chearfull readyness in his countenance to serve me, I was almost provoked by him but I conquered myself and thanked him for what I must really pay him. I should rejoice to leave sweet hot London and see my young fri but till Mr. Bernard gives me leave I dare not stirr, for he's the only man I depend on. My Humble duty to my Mother, tell her I shall send down A pair of Her shoes this week."

More than six years have elapsed, the business is still dragging on, and the Widow is in the hands of the lawyers, but at last Ralph Palmer can write to her brother:

". . . Your sister Lovett has the Resolution of Trinity House in her favour, and dined with us on Sunday on a piece of Sir Thomas Cave's Venison. She is going down thither on Friday, as does this day Mrs. Porter (the Player) to entertain our friends at Middle Claydon, for whom my Lord sends his coach and six horses to Aylsbury, with a most complimentary Assurance that She and whomsoever She brings with her, shall be most heartily welcome there. Mine, my Dearest's, and Aunts, best respects to my good Niece, your Dear Self and Sweet little ones."

24 July
1716.

Mr. Tighe, her co-executor, lived on till August 1736.

Col. John Lovett, in his original design for the Lighthouse, spoke of it as a good investment for the future of his second wife, Mary, and of her boy Verney. His two elder boys were amply provided for in Ireland, but Christopher, the second son, from whom the present family descends, made his protest in having his portrait painted with the Eddystone Lighthouse in the background.

There are many letters full of indignation and disgust at the small prices offered for Mary Lovett's hitherto unique possession in the Channel. The Lighthouse was eventually put up to auction, and bought by a syndicate, of which Rudyard was a member, for £8000. The money is paid on Lady Day, 1716. Its late owner thinks the purchasers have "a great bargain", but she is glad to be rid of it. Thus this singular family estate disappears from the correspondence.

An historical association with the Lighthouse, called "the Eddystone", on the old penny piece has no real foundation in fact. Sir R. Johnson, the Deputy Master of the Mint, has been good enough to supply some details of the many changes in the model for the penny.

The figure of Britannia remained practically unchanged from the reign of Charles II. to that of Victoria. On the bronze coinage introduced in 1860, a lighthouse is seen behind her and a three-masted ship under sail. There was a popular belief that the lighthouse and vessel had always formed part of the design, whereas the ship appeared first in 1797, was removed in the reign of George IV. and restored to the bronze coinage of 1860, when a lighthouse was added for the first time, and only permitted to remain for some thirty-five years, so that the "Eddystone Lighthouse", so called, was allowed no permanence, even under the guardianship of Britannia's Trident.

It was the irony of fate that the name of Rudyard, the architect, should have remained while that of his employer, Colonel Lovett, whose enthusiasm and perseverance carried the enterprise to a successful end, should have entirely disappeared. The very post-cards now sold at Plymouth, representing the four successive lighthouses on the Eddystone Rock, only recognise Rudyard's name on the second.

In the next spring Mary Lovett lost her chief friend and supporter in this long-drawn-out business, in the sudden death of her father in his London lodging.



Mary [Verney] Lovett.



Of the pictures of the Lighthouse, that Colonel Lovett had had painted, the one sent to Ireland remains in his family, as well as the Claydon picture as here given. The Trinity House lost theirs and all the papers referring to it in a great fire in 1714.

Forty years after the auction sale on the afternoon of December 2, 1755, the Lighthouse caught fire, and though the tides and the storms of fifty winters had done it not "a peny of damadge", the flames destroyed it so rapidly that its keepers could not be rescued by a Plymouth boat before they had been fatally injured.

Mary Lovett, when she read this in the *London Gazette*, must have thought of the toilsome days her husband had spent about it, and how they had sung in the little village church of Middle Claydon a special "Laudamus" for the completion of the Lighthouse on the Eddystone Rock.

CHAPTER XIX

OF PARSONS AND THEIR WIVES

FROM the references in the Verney Letters, it would be easy to judge the clergy of the time too hardly. But the scramble for a living is distressing; when there is a sick brother in a fairly good cure, we hear of importunate applicants, often before the death and certainly before the funeral of the incumbent.

Cary Stewkley writes to Sir John Verney:

3 Aug.
1697
(Monday).

"... Our Lecturer is dead at Islington, and my brother Viccars stands with severall others for the place, The Gentleman dyed but last Thursday night."

The term Lecturer seems to denote an ordained parson without a living, who was ready to take services on an emergency.

Sir John constantly receives such applications.

30 May
1699.

"On Sunday last I saw a Letr. from a Beneficed Parson within six or seven miles of Waseing, who writes word that the Parson of Waseing lies a dying, and therefore desires that I would give him the next presentation, but I assured him he is not like to have it."

A fortnight later Sir John writes:

13 June
1699.

"The Minister of Whichurch in Berks hath writt to a friend of his, that the Rector of Waseing being newly fallen ill he desires I may be spoke to for him. The former that writt for was the Rector of Oakingham."

All these gentlemen were disappointed; the Rector of Waseing recovered.

17 Oct.
1699.

Ralph Palmer to Sir John Verney

"... You writt about nephew Will White comeing to Chelsey, if our Doctor King should dye, but I think there is little hopes of that, for he is a lusty strong man, & more likely to bury all Chelsey before he goes; I hope you will remember him when Mr. Butterfield

dyes, for he is most likely to goe first, I wish he were better provided for, but I think to som so near Towne he would not be liked."

Ralph Palmer writes from Chelsea a few years later:

"The Lectureship being vacant here, the two Competitors have been at Fisticuffs about it, which I reckon we may heare more of in the Observer." 15 June 1708.

Ralph Palmer, at the Temple, to Lord Fermanagh

19 Nov.
1706.

"Read Dr. Burge's Text, Ezekiel the 35th on the Thanksgiving Day. Upon Mounsieur the French King, viz. 'Behold O Mountsier I am against you, &c., I will pursue Thee unto Blood, even Blood shall pursue Thee. Thus will I make Mountseir most desolate &c., in Thy hills (the Alps) and in Thy Valleys (the Plain of Piedmont) and in all Thy Rivers (the Danube) shall They fall that are slain with the Sword &c. I have heard all the Blasphemies (Viro Immortali &c).' Read the whole Chapter."

On the other hand, there is frequent mention in London parishes of the daily visits of the Minister to the sick, and of the administration of Communion to the dying.

It was an age of eloquent and philosophical sermons in high places, and also of sermons which were violent political pamphlets and reprinted as such; but there were many sermons full of spiritual counsel and practical good sense. In the heavy folio volumes of Archbishop Tillotson's sermons addressed to women of fashion, the duty of nursing their babies is strictly and severely enjoined, with details of the dangers to infants of "strange milk", etc., which the Primate could hardly have been expected to ravel into. He deplores extravagant gifts to the nurses at christenings (constantly alluded to in the letters), which lead, he says, to the subsequent neglect of the baby by a nurse who is only looking forward to more christening fees—presumably a harsh judgement, though the Archbishop was himself a family man.

The sermons of popular preachers had a large sale. Some years earlier Sir John Verney was sending his father sermons by Tillotson and Stillingfleet:

"The last only came out yesterday, and before night the whole impression of 4000 was sold, and this day will be a second Impression of 3000. The Bishop of London's sermon [Compton's] is not likely to come out, but I think Dr. Patrick will publish his fast-day Sermon." 28 Nov. 1678.

There were, of course, circles in which atheism and witty scepticism were fashionable, but in the Verney Letters the duty of regular attendance at the Sunday services is recognized as much by men as by women. Lodgings are chosen in London for their nearness to a favourite church, and letters which were often written by the family early on Sunday mornings were abruptly broken off at the sound of the Middle Claydon Church bells.

One of the clergymen whom we know individually in the Letters is John, second son of Nancy Nicholas, and grandson of Dr. Denton. When he was born in 1674, Simon Patrick had been for twelve years Rector of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, the church which all the family had attended in successive generations, and where Dr. Patrick ministered for nearly thirty years. One of the leading London clergy, he had remained at his post during the Great Plague; and was often quite embarrassed by the generosity of his congregation. He was John Nicholas's godfather, and doubtless influenced his childhood. In later years Dr. Patrick was Bishop of Ely, and the author of many famous theological works; he lived till 1707. His godson meanwhile went to Harrow and Trinity College, Oxford, in 1690, and took his M.A. degree in 1696. He was looking after his mother in her last illness in 1700, and was ordained in 1701.

13 Jan.
1700.

Elizabeth Adams to Sir John Verney

"... Mr. Abdy that was the Minister diied & left my Lady Abdy exetricks & my cosen Jack Nicklas is to have his living, so he is to goe in to orders with all speid, this good living has mad him declar his resolutions of being A Minister & now his next busines must be to get a good fortun with a wife, his parsnig will be A very good provision for A younger brother his own porsion besids."

Mrs. Adams, a clergyman's widow, was unduly hard on the profession: there was no need to impute to John Nicholas any mercenary motives. He had a good reputation at Oxford, and she lived to hear of him as "an eminent preacher". He had services twice a Sunday, and had greatly increased his congregation.

John Nicholas married "a daur. of Parson Dod"; they lost their first baby, so the joy was great when they had a son to live. He was christened George, after his grandfather, Lord Fermanagh and Sir Robert Abdy being his sponsors.

*Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh*18 Feb.
1710.

"... I am much Amased to hear Cus. John Nicklas has not writt to you since his Boy was Christened. Joyes should not make him forgett all maners and good Natuer. I am apt to think sum leter is lost by the carelines of Dr. Nicklas's servts., for they often doe such things."

Aunt Adams' ill-natured remark was again uncalled for.

There is an allusion to a pluralist, Mr. Penn, in another of her letters:

"... I have not seen my Cousen Pascoll, so am not abell to give a true Account of the way he tacks to get Mr. Penn out of his living; but I know he has forfeited Baddow by tacking three liveings at once; tho' my Cousen Pascoll did not molest him till he provoked him to it by his insolent carig, but when I know you shall."

2 Aug.
1710.

Among Lord Fermanagh's letters is a sheet of paper, with the elaborate pen-flourishes he himself indulged in as a youth, with one verse out of Bishop Ken's Evening Hymn, written in a large text hand by a grandchild, and sent to him:

Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed,
Teach me to die that so I may
With joy behold the awful day.

The saintly Bishop was still alive, and it is a tribute to the early popularity of his famous hymn, published in 1695.

Lady Gardiner had many friends among the clergy, and gives a pleasant account of several of them. She never seemed to read books, but liked to hear sermons, specially those of her friend Dr. Manningham, made Bishop of Chichester in 1709.

There was a queer story of an old vicar of East Claydon, well known to Lady Gardiner in the earlier days, the Rev. Hugh Hart. He was a lover and collector of books, and left an unusual library. He was a delicate man, with a shrew of a wife, as much disliked in the parish as he was respected. This account was written of him by Lady Gardiner's nephew, the Squire of East Claydon:

"Candlemasse Day last, the Men Servants of Bottle Claydon made a Riding about Mrs. Hart's beating her old Husband, who was so unadvised as to take notice of it yesterday in his Pulpit. They passed by my House yesterday & 'twas as foolish a thing as

4 Feb.
1678.

26 Dec.
1678.

ever I saw. I suppose their Masters privately Egg'd on the Businnesse, but appear'd not themselves, nor their sonnes, only Will Holland my Miller's Sonne Ledd the Horse." By the end of the year, "Mr. Hart was so ill yesterday at Church, that Strong Waters were forced to be sent for him, in so much that it was fear'd he would dye".

A "Riding" in the old sense was sometimes a festive procession. Here it is used ironically, when a hostile demonstration was made against the vicar's wife.

3 Oct.
1699.

Lady Gardiner to Sir John Verney

"... I have got so great A cold as I am now layd up, and hapy if I can ovar come it. Fine men in perfect helth & strength is taken away in a moment, as the reador of St. Clemens who had christened two children & could not christen the third bot said he was very ill & dropt down dead. Hee went very well into the Church & was a strong helthfull man of about 50 yeares of age. His name is Prud, An emynent man in the church, a Lenten prechaire, his profit was £150 a yeare. Left 5 children, two of them marryed, hee was so good a man as tis said hee was beloved liveing and lamented now dead."

Another of Lady Gardiner's reminiscences may find a place here; it belonged to their Preshaw days:

25 Aug.
1679.

"... My husband found by the neighbours that the Incumbent (Mr. Bridge) was very near death. He went the same day and dined with the Bishshop of Canterbury and made our humble request to him—who answered him that he had eight chaplains and wanted livings to bestow on them, whom he must look to before strangers, and this living he had designed for a near friend of his, if it fell, which it did immediately—and the Bishshop as speedily gave it to his Sister's Son."

12 Dec.
1710.

The Rev. Joshua Hotchkiss, at Kingsey, to Lord Fermanagh, at Westminster

"My Lord,—I hope your Lop. will please to remember me for a copy of the Poll when printed; you'll find my name for Moulso, my other living.

Now your Lop. is chosen a Kt. of this Shire, it will look very oddly if Dr. Busby (who ran out of the Country at the last Election) be still the only Clergyman, A Commissioner for the Land Tax. Are there not other Drs. in the County of more Learning than he,

and better parsonages than his? This is humbly offer'd to your Lop.'s better Judgmt. by, My Lord, Your Lop.'s most faithfull humble servant."

This post was much coveted: it was pleasant to settle how much Land Tax your neighbour had to pay.

"P.S. But your Lop. must by noe means forget Mr. Barker of Great Horwood, Mr. Busby of Marsh, and Mr. Tho. Saunders of Pitchcot; all zealous for your Lop.—you meet Mr. Herbert in the House every day." 12 Dec.
1710.

Later, the Rev. Benjamin Archer, rector of Quainton, writes to assure Lord Fermanagh that he has the approval of all his friends in the county, and that the election is not less applauded by the University of Oxford; and that his very enemies can find nothing to object to in his Address, and he hopes that the adverse party will find it in vain to oppose him. 16 Dec.
1710.

A letter to Lord Fermanagh from the Earl of Lichfield shows that private patrons were aware of their responsibilities in appointing a clergyman:

"My Lord,—I had the honour of your Lordship's by this post, and am glad it happened in my power to pleasure your Lordship in giving this living of Fleet-Marston to the gentleman you mentioned. I have no knowledge of him mysele, therefore shall wholly rely on you, that he is a good man, and not apt to be troublesome or unquiett in his conduct." 15 Dec.
1710.

Lord Lichfield is probably thinking of all the trouble that Dr. Sacheverell had stirred up.

The clergyman recommended, a Mr. White, was a cousin of Lord Fermanagh's on the Palmers' side. Lady Fermanagh writes: 17 Dec.
1710.

"Here is a letter from Mr. White; Mr. Shagrase is buried, I wish Mr. White may get the living."

Lord Fermanagh's letter to Lord Cheyne probably refers to the family of a clergyman who had suffered both under the Long Parliament and at the Restoration, and for whom Sir Ralph Verney had so great a regard.

Lord Fermanagh to Lord Cheyne

"The Bearer is Mr. Wm. Clarke, a Master of Arts and Fellow of Trinity College in Oxford; but he will be better known to you by

4 Oct.
1711.

being son to Mr. Wm. Clarke the Minister of Long Crendon, for which place the father hath often voted as you may find in the severall Polls of our County. He is informed there is a Vacancy at Cheshambois, and is your humble Petitioner for that Donative. If you'll please to heare him Preache he is very ready to obey that you may judge of his qualifications; he hath a Testimoniall from Oxford. They are both with me and desire that I'de write to your Lordship in his behalfe; what you doe for him will be a favour to our friends and particularly to, my Lord, your Lordship's most humble and faithful servant,
FERMANAGH."

Lord Fermanagh to Rev. W. Vickers

"Sir,—I am glad the Westminr. Ladyes were so kind to themselves as to come and dine with you, and as an addition to your happiness I perceive Young Damsells of Covent Garden and Harvey Court visited you the same day, so that you have all the Tosts of those three places at once, too many in all reason for one Doctor though never so able. I am sorry the short sholdier is like to rise no higher, and that Guy Palmes is so unfortunate, for I think he is an Honest Fellow. . . . Mr. Tighe went yesterday for Ireland but we are 14 at our Table still, but the best of you is that you give me hopes of making a Journey into these parts with your Spouse. I desire you to egg on that thought, you shall be very welcome.

I heare the Blind Lady Russell is dead, which I feare will be a loss to the Westminster Ladies."

Penelope Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

19 Oct.
1712.

". . . I wish I had some of your Carpe, for I understand eating it better than your present Guests. I am told Tom Saunders is maryed to Mrs. Hallitt [?] and appeared at Church at Southgate last Sunday; her Clothes very fine, and that hee has given her Pr. of Dimond Earerins, a Dimond Ringe, and a Dimond String to Draw her Hood through; his Linning very good, and his clothes very Gentele. There is mighty talk of the French Embasidors Comeing, and as his Ladys Dressed, her Mode is thought will bee followed. . . . Lady Masham had her Fright in her Chaire at Winsor, that the Quene was very much concerned for her, that there was as much Care taken of her as if it had bin the Queen herselfe; She was plessed to sitt by her three hours Late at night by her bedside, so my Cousin Adams told me, who came here to see Miss Cave. I guess Guy told it her, he being amoungst Quollity on Sunday. We heare your house has been full of Company all this sommer, long may you live to meke your friends welcome."

*Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh*29 Nov.
1712.

"My Lord,—Sir Thomas Cave was wont to say I filled your country with Lies, and Mistress Penne tells me I give your honr. too much trouble with my Scribblings so often, how I shall acquit my selfe of these two inditements I know not. We have nothing but continued Great Raines, and they say the floods are so great at Stratford by Bow that People cannot pass without Boates. Tis said that Mackerty had five hundred pounds given him the morning he fought the Duel, the Lord have mercy upon us. [General Macartney was second to Lord Mohun in his famous duel with the Duke of Hamilton, and took a share in it. He was the subject of many evil reports—some of them untrue.] Hath gott a prize of a thousand pounds in the Lottery, one Jackson, a Petty Cannon in St Paul's.

Miss Cave [aged six] in Sherburne Lane, every day att Dinner Drinks a health to Claydon, Stanford, the Queen and Church, to Sir Sachevrill, and her maid Betty, of whom she is very fond; both our humble services to all the Honourable Claydonians, with your Grand-Daughter's Duty. Pray decide this Controversy between Man and Wife, whether in Bucks, or Buxs, you are famous for making up Differences among the Parsons and their Wives."

*Lord Fermanagh to Rev. W. Vickers*11 Dec.
1712.

"I recd. your Letter and rejoyce that my Aunt Adams was soe well again as to be at Cards, which recreation will lengthen her dayes. The frost is gone and the Sun shines, soe that now I hope Madam Penney (like the Snail) comes out of her shell and goes abroad again, if in her late confinement she did not Scorch her clothes as much as her Shins. I did not care if all the Quakers in our Country followed the Example of thir Brother in London Street by Stepney."

"... We think it our best way to stay at home by a fireside, and if the great Floods continue you may bidd adieu to Mutton, and feed on Black Cattle, for Sheep will not be able to get to London; I hear at Uxbridge they have Boates to wayfe Sheep over the water."

30 Nov.
1712.

"Sir,—I trouble you with letters to lessen a little your Jolity this Festivall time to think of your friends in the Country. Great Concorse of people come dayly to our house, yesterday three honest Clergymen and an abundance of Countrymen dayly. I wish you were here to see the Spitts and Cupps goe round; I have already kill'd two Oxen this week and four sheep, and of Poultry wee keep noe reckoning. I have this week had a small prize of £20 as I am informed and I might have had more for aught I know but that the Drawing is adjourned till tomorrow. I hope I shall heare of

28 Dec.
1712.

some good fortune in the Lottery attending your good selfe. I wish you both a merry New Yeare."

Pope's lines were being exemplified at the Claydon dinner-table by Lord Fermanagh's clerical guests:

Who first his judgment asked and then a place;
Much they extolled his pictures, much his Seat,
And flattered every day and some days eat.

It was after such a "Concorse of people" that a report was whispered that the clergy, who felt that they had been largely instrumental in electing the county member, were not so welcome as they might be when they arrived at dinner-time, and that their host had given the profession the ugly name of Smell-Feast.

Mr. Vickers was in despair. Could the gout have produced a momentary irritation in the mind of their benefactor? It must be contradicted at all hazards, yet Mr. Charlton affirmed that the term "Smell-Feast" was repeated amongst the Bucks clergy, but he promised to take speedy and effectual pains to confront such a scandal.

12 Feb.
1713.

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

"... The Lord Cornbery dyed this day, and Sir Tho. Hammond waited on the Queen yesterday from France, who is now very well againe. The Author of the Flying Post will be tryed a Saturday at Guildhall, and some say the Bp. of Salusbury's Son, also for his Scribblings. I wish your Honr. much Joy of Mr. Verney's Court Preferment; Mr. Palmer of Chelsea came yesterday to make Miss a Visit, who told her Mr. Verney was made one of the Deputy-Lieutenants of the County, and Chairman. It's said the Lord Southerland hath confronted that Account in the Post Boy given by Col. Hamilton which you had a Saturday last."

1712.

The Rev. Thomas Sheppard, of Whaddon, writes a long letter to Lord Fermanagh, asking him to lend him £150 to pay off some creditors, "whose patience for lack of a friend is quite tyred out, and turns into threats—who am in visible danger of Sinking under a tolerable and handsome Income and Estate".

Another unhappy parson writes from a debtors' prison.

13 Feb.
1713.

Rev. Thomas Mason to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—I am very unjustly and villanously hurried into Alisbury Joale by Watson of Edgecote, and here I must abide thro' the perfidiousness of Serjeant Selby my Councill, who never spoke

one word for me in Court tho' he was retained Councell for me, I suppose he was better feed by my adversary which made him silent in my cause. He has obtained a rule of Court to charge me here with a forty-six pound debt, and in this sorry place I must abide till the said summ is paid in Court, tho' I don't owe Watson or his Clyent one shilling of the money. Under this Confinement I have no friend to apply to for the money who has so much ready cash by him, therefore my necessity enforces me to address your Lordship for your assistance in this my great Exigency. . . . My Lord, my condition is calamitous to lye here amongst Beggars and Thieves, and thereupon I put on the Confidence of an importunate Suppliant, not in the least doubting your Lordship's compliance therewith."

Ralph Palmer to Ralph Verney

May
1714.

" . . . My Cosen White's affair has passed the Archi-Episcopal & Ld. Chancellor's Seal both, and I believe he had yesterday Institution, and he goes tomorrow for Ailesbury, wher lives the Bishop's Something, that is to give him Induction, which happens well in his way. The Bp. of Lincoln gave him 7 more questions (very easy ones God knows) to answer and sent him to his Secretary's Lodging to do it, so they passed his Grace current. . . . My Lord Continues very well, and I hear nothing more of his leaving London. Sir Tho. Cave talk'd of going home today. The D. of Leeds shot one Mr. Bradshaw of the Temple, a man of £1500 a year, who is his son's steward, and to pay him monies for not paying before he could get it in, and Fled immediately to France (but the man is not dead), where he pretended to be a Malcontent and has taken out considerable supplies."

Ralph Palmer, at the Middle Temple, to Lord Fermanagh

30 June
1715.

"I give your Lordsp. the trouble of reading this because I was to wait on Lady Fermanagh to the Bishp. of Lincoln, believing your Lordsp. will be very well pleased to hear that we have obtain'd his promise not to take advantage of the Lapse, in case my Cozen White's matters shou'd not be all ready to gain him Institution before your 6 months are expir'd, which I hope will Ensure him your Lp.'s gracious benefaction, which is very obliging to him in particular, and next to Us all who are his Relations. The Bisp. he was so kind to tell us that a Letter from your Lordsp. directed to himself (that he may communicate to the Archbp. to facilitate the Dispensation) wou'd be of great service, and as to the Testimonials subscribed by the Clergy, he says It will be still better if the Layety subscribe 'em too, and the more they are and the better the Quality are subscribing, the better yet. The particulars of the Letter he

hinted might be, how long he has liv'd in Steeple Claydon, the Love the people there and in the neighbourhood have for him, his in-offensive behaviour and what other merits he has. For as the Bp. observed to Us, not doubting Us to be Torys, that the Archbp. (*to Give him his Due*) regarded nothing so much as the Service of the Cures, and spoke it with such an Accent and Aspect as if he thought we had no great Opinion of his Grace, tho' We are sure to command his Pastoral Care to him. It wou'd be mighty proper too for your Lp. to touch upon the smallness of the Parish of Fleet Marston, and fewness of inhabitants, if You please.

I cannot tell what detriment the public may suffer if we shou'd have occation to resort to him any more, for he was so very obliging to Us that We are half proselytes to Whiggism, tho' at the present crisis should be not best to declare. . . . I hope this affair, my Lord, will goe on smoothly to Cos. White's comfort and your Lop.'s good liking."

He is corresponding with his nephew about a vicarage, apparently in Essex:

23 Sept.
1715.

"Your Busyness of Procuration to the Bishop of London I have thought of, they regularly belong to the whole Liveing, tho' sometimes the Endowment of the Vicarage has borne it, and tho' Simon Deg says both shall not pay, it is but an Ipse dixit, and without farther majority, and he is often mistaken.

In strict justice, the Impropiator and Vicar should bear the Charge proportionally, because it was arising originally from one and the same revenues, unless 'twas otherwise agreed between them, then that will appear and the Value too, but where that has ever been payd I am afraid the presumption will be most against the Impropiator that payd it ever or once. . . . And the Impropiator having the Cream of the Church, the Skim Milk of the Vicar will be the more spared. . . . I know not how this matter will determine, of which I do not remember to have met with any decision in our Books, which I have few of here."

15 June
1714.

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

"The Schism Bill now passed by a Majority to the Great Mortification of your friends the Whiggs. Mistress Pen on Sunday last was to visit the Lord Rochester's house at Petersome [?]. . . . Mary Page hath left twenty shilling rings to the Stewkleys, Aunt Adams is so Bucksome as if she were but 18, she hath dreampt severall nights of the Golden Bottle. . . . Dr. Ratclif hath bought Mr. Charlton's house at East Norton."

17 June
1714.

"The Flying Post hath a Letter which if you be at leisure I would have you confound it for the good of the publick; I hear your Honr.

is an Author this year, I hope you'll send me one of your folios. . . . Mr. Ifford [?] Ross did me the honour of a Visit and sayd my old friend Jockey lives a Wild Ranting Rate. I have bought my Lord Clarendon's History in folio. I cannot learn this evening what the Commons have done with the Schism Bill."

"My Lord,—We must thank you for your kind present, and then tell you of a Scurvy trick which Bell Stewkley served Aunt Adams and the Company a Friday last. We all dined there, Bell stole the Aniseed water bottle and privately drank it up, and to make good the Want of that Cordiall fill'd up the same bottle with foul water at night; the Company going away Aunt brings out her cordiall that each might have a soop. Car. eager for the spirit dranck off her noggin, but said it was brackish; the dram went round amongst all except Mrs. Pen, who luckily chose a glass of wine; the effects of this cordiall were wonderfull, the old maids the next morning were non above 19."

4 Jan.
1715.

Ralph Palmer sends his nephew detailed account of a horse, which he may buy for twelve pounds: "He is said to be very sure footed and he clammers our ruts as if he was".

7 Dec.
1716.

The usual Christmas presents are being exchanged, and Lord F. was expecting the brawn from Baddow, "if the Carryer don't doe as he did last year, when he left it for a fortnight at London. . . . I have between 200 and 300 pounds a yeare of my own land to let between this Country being very poor". Lord F.'s right hand was disabled by gout, but he had an excellent scribe with a beautiful handwriting in his daughter Betty. Concerning the marriage of a maidservant, there had been an obscure quarrel between the Rev. William Vickers and his wife, and she had written in distress and with elaborate secrecy to Lord Fermanagh, as the universal peacemaker. The husband referred to it very airily, "that Madame Penn has pretty well disposed of her maid's quawm, so we are in hopes of much felicity if we had some of your mony, a moderate gleaning would satisfy the Doctor". He writes at the end of the year to Ralph Verney:

"Sir,—You know my Spouse hath a mad fitt once a year, and therefore to keep her in Good Temper, I beg the favour of you, of a couple of hairees towards the latter end of the next week—A Couple—because I shall be teezed with more madd people besides herselfe, and I have no other remedy to keep them quiet but by stopping their mouths."

Lord Fermanagh is also expected to provide Christmas fare.

27 Dec.
1716.

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord F.

"My Lord,—The Good Cheer is with you where the long baggs lie. Empty Purses make but thin tables and clean sheetes, this is our case till you send us your Sparrow—then Wee will sing, Rejoyce, and be merry, washing away sorrow with a glass of Your Cordiall. . . . Your Aunt the other night was dangerously ill but no sooner did Dr. Pam appear but She rose from the Dead."

CHAPTER XX

"THE EVILL DOCTOR"

SIR JOHN VERNEY had many friends among the clergy, especially after he became M.P. for the county in 1710. He had the patronage of several small livings and though his strong Protestant traditions forbade him to sympathize with Dr. Sacheverell and the Jacobite party at Oxford, it was probably, as she hoped, to attach him more strongly to the Church party, that Queen Anne was prompted to make him an Irish Peer.

In a society which so loved to make its deep bows to a title, the Viscount became at once more influential than the Baronet.

The old Rector, William Butterfield, had been a faithful family friend, like his father before him and the son who was to succeed him, but they seemed to feel a reflected lustre from the new title at the house and the coronet on the coach panels.

Long before this accession of dignity Sir John's most intimate friends were the Rev. William Vickers and his wife Penelope, the "Celia" of the correspondence with Lady Shuckburgh, and his own first cousin.

It seemed quite a freak of fortune that Penelope Stewkley should marry a clergyman.

She was a favourite not only with Lady Shuckburgh but with other members of the family; she had a little money of her own, though Lady Gardiner had truly described her daughters as "portionless"; and on this account a project of marriage for Penelope which Sir Ralph had had much at heart had fallen through without the name of the gentleman having been divulged. Dr. Sharrock, their kind physician, was very anxious to recommend a friend of his as a desirable husband for the young lady, and wrote about it during her last weeks at Preshaw. Peg Gardiner, who was Pen's special friend amongst her sisters, was sounded on the subject, and affirmed that Pen had always said that she could never

Nov.
1678.

be a clergyman's wife. Pen repeated this assertion, begging that it might not be imputed to pride. She was not at all happy at home, and a man of any other profession, she would have gladly considered. So the Rev. Mr. Markland, Dr. Sharrock's friend, though "A Landed Man", was refused unseen.

Penelope seems to have gone through a time of poverty and sadness after the death of her father in 1684. They left the house, "Under the Arch in Lincoln's Inn Ffields", and settled in James Street near the "New Church in St. James's", and later in the cheaper neighbourhood of Islington. Before this last move, Penelope Stewkley was married to William Vickers (or Viccars), but we know neither the date nor the circumstances of her marriage, only that the prospects of an income were small. William Vickers was in Orders, and looking for preferment. He was well regarded in the family, and was also living at Islington.

Whenever there was trouble or illness "Daughter Viccars" was urgently sent for, and especially during Lady Gardiner's illness in the spring of 1700. She recovered, contrary to all expectations, and dictated a letter to Sir John, signed by herself:

14 May
1700.

"I know my Daur. Viccar will write you word of her husband's having a good Reader's place in the Citty; the rent of those houses will be very high, yett thay are confin'd to live in the Parish, butt he doubts not at Michelmass that he shall get scollers enough to pay his house rent & ad sumething to his renew. But poor woman she is very ill, & troubled to leave her Airy habytatione to be confin'd to a house in A narrow Cort in the Citty, and says before her husband that she is going to be beried. . . . I say all the Comefortable things to her I can & sartingly thare Income will be better, & hope it is in thare way to A better prefarment, which he told me he has sum promisis of. My daur. Carolina desiars of the favour of you to bring up your silver Candlesticks, & Cary desiars the Silver Leadle."

We do not know what justified Cowper's epithet of "Merry Islington" in John Gilpin's ride, but it was highly esteemed by its inhabitants, who spoke of its "pure air" as if it had been an Alpine health resort. There were certainly some Mineral Springs at Islington, visited by those who considered Tunbridge Wells and the Bath too expensive and distant.

Penelope's fears were not fulfilled, and they settled down happily in Sherborne Lane, which was to be their home for many years to come; but nothing could be done without Sir John's help and

advice. Penelope writes him a long letter—they are just moving house, and have to

"Furnish a Chamber, by 6 Chaires for the Dining Room, stove for the Chimney, a cestron for water, my husband nor me should have noe money pd. us, untill the middle of February." 6 Dec; 1701.

She wishes, of course, to be supplied by Sir John.

"Sir E. D. and his Lady came in at Aunt Adams' when Sis Cary & I was there, hee nevar tooke no notice of us in the leeste, my Lady said you ware against Lord Cheney & for Mr. Wharton, & if you was not for one you did not apear for the othere, but I said not a word. . . . I said when thay ware gon I did not care to receve any favour from a famly that has slited you . . . he might have asked how my mother did. Cos Bote has a son. Mr. Abell playes at hide and seeke from his Suitar & that Gang who seekes daily aftar him. . . . Wee hear Sir Thomas Powys is dying . . . begging your pardon for this long scrall."

She had asked for some legal papers in his custody.

Sir John replies somewhat severely that he was forced to look over abundance of papers to send her what she had asked for.

"You that have none but your own business may easily remember it, but I that have much of my own & abundance of other peoples', its impossible I should carry it all in my head, & therefore when you write to me, you should state your acct. clearly, that I may know what to do, without after Claps & a hurry. . . . I am sorry Sir H. Stewkley will not promise to do something for your sisters, considering what your mother has from me, I think it would be much properer if they would dun Sir H. S. and not me." 7 Dec. 1701.

Penelope Vickers to Sir John Verney

14 Dec;
1701.

"Good Sir,—I am much concerned my last letr. gave you so great a trouble, but will for the futour, take more care not to make any mistakes to give you double trouble. . . . Just now I heard from Islington my Mother is better, I think as you do concerning her, but I cannot help it, I wish Sir Hugh woud do for them with all my soule . . . by all that I can gather from him, my Mother had an hour's discourse by herself with him, when he dined ther, & came out cryeing, bot shee nor thay nevar hinted one word before me. . . . Kitty & Bell left at Sir H. S.'s, who carries it off civill & kind to them all, but hee might bee kinder to himself & them too, if he woud manage more prudently, but his deabts increase, which will be a great hindrance to his daughter's marriages, though all

very well to be liked in every respect, had the father the ready rino, but they may live to be old maids as well as some others. They say Jack How is turned out of this Parliament, the Cleargie ware he stood, wee heare, ware all for him, & som call them the Black Guard, & think one of the reasons he lost it. When you pleas to write to mee, bee pleased to dirict into Sherbon Lane, neere Ram Alley."

Sir John receives a letter referring to the creditors of a Mr. Henry Turner, who is a bankrupt. They are asked to accept 6s. in the pound, "that the poor man may get his liberty to labour for the maintenance for himself and wife". As Mr. Vickers is among the creditors, Sir John writes to Mrs. Penelope, "at her house next doore to Ram Alley in Sherbone Lane".

11 Mar.
1702.

". . . I send you a copy of a letter about Mr. Turner's business, and desire you to act about it as in your judgmt. you think fitt, so that you or your Husband may meet the Creditors. Truly I think six shillings in the pound is but a small business, and usually some of the Creditors are paid all or most part of their monies, and its they oft times plead for the man to induce others to accept of what's offer'd. There are so many abuses in such affaires that I knowe not how to advise, the people which break, often are better, that is richer men afterwards than ever they were before. Pray desiar Mr. Lupart to inform you how much Interest is due on the bond that you may tell the whole debt at the meeting. It may be you may gett Mr. Knatchpole (that lives with Mr. Lupart) to goe along with you or your husband. I am just goeing to visit Mr. Greenville at Whatton, so must conclude."

8 Aug.
1702.

Lady Gardiner, infirm as she was, writes to Sir John:

"I was isterday to see my daughter Vickers, who has a hansome house, shee was not at homb but hee was, this was the first place I went to beesids the Church and came homb very weary."

Penelope was with her sorrowing sisters during her mother's last illness, and death, in 1704, and accompanied them on the long dismal journey in November, for her burial. William Vickers is alluded to henceforth as "Lecturer". He christened Elizabeth and Penelope, the daughters of Sir Thomas and Lady Cave, and two of the Verney babies. He seems to have added some practice of medicine to his Divinity.

22 May
1709.

Lord Fermanagh to Mrs. Vickers

". . . I heare your Spouse hath Mr. Barnard in Cure for the King's Evill. It will be a great Credit if he cures him; his Uncle the

Surgeon Genll. and many others having for many years tried to no purpose, and severall times he hath tryed the Bath. Some say tis not the Evill but the usuall distemper of the Country wher he was born, Jamaica. He is very Rich, hath an estate in land in Bucksre., and a great deale of money, soe that I hope he'll be a profitable patient. His mother was a Temple, sister to Lady Molesworth; she first married Judge Barnard in Jamaica, and next to one Lawes: she dyed about one or two yeares agoe."

It was curious that the Rev. William Vickers should be treating sufferers for the King's Evil, when Queen Anne had revived the practice, dropped by King William, of the Royal Touch; and it was supposed to be a test of the Divine Sanction of her hereditary rule. Perhaps she was only touching those pronounced incurable by the physicians, but would *they* have recognized the medical treatment by a clergyman? In consequence of his pretensions to cure the King's Evil, he was styled in the family "the Evill Clergyman" and the "Prince of Darkness"—he took the sting out of the joke by calling himself the Quack Doctor, and the Evill One. He had been practising for some time, when he sent an advertisement to a News Letter, which followed an account of Fresh Lisbon Snuff.

From the Post Boy, No. 1289, Jan. 12, 1710

12 Jan.
1710.

"Mr. Vickers the Clergyman, who Cures the King's Evil, liveth in Sherburne Lane, near Lombard Street, who hath Cured 106 Persons since October 1706. Some of them so grievously tormented therewith in their eyes and joints (as himself formerly was), that Words can hardly express their miserable Condition."

After this, comes an account of a lost pet, described in much detail:

"Lost out of Orchard Street, Jan. 12, a Little Spaniel Dog, Liver Coloured with a little White about his Neck, all his Feet White, a little Mottl'd, his Tail longer than usual, and turns up with a white Tuft; whoever will bring him to Mr. Botelers, in Orchard Street, shall have ten shills reward."

On the inner sheet of the *Post Boy*, Mr. Vickers writes to Ralph Verney at Baddow Hall. He alludes to Dr. Sacheverell's trial; announces that Captain Lloyd "comes for London this week" and that the Lottery Bill "was read with some amendments in the House".

14 Jan.
1710.

17 Jan.
1710.

Daniel Baker to Ralph Verney

"I presume you have heard how more favourable the Lords have been then the Commons was to Dr. Sacheverell in granting him everyone of his four Requests; and that noe less considerable a Man then the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford is his Bail, as he had before promised."

21 Jan.
1710.

Rev. W. Vickers to Ralph Verney

[He encloses another number of the *Post Boy*.] "... The Lottery this night is filled up. . . . I have purchased 5 Tickets, and my wife was inclined to put in a hundred pound of her money, had this been in her hands, which I think is better ware it is. Collonell Lovett's Lady on Monday last was brought to bed of a girl. . . . I saw this week a Pindar published by Dr. West & Dr. Westward, dedicated to my Ld. Tavistock, which I wondered at."

The *Post Boy* enclosed announced that "The War is as good as over".

"Brussels, Jan. 27.—The Report of the French King's Death which was so current, and met with general credit here, begins to cool."

The relations are inclined to be sceptical about the "Evill Doctor's" powers, but if he had them, they were ready to apply to him.

2 Feb.
1710.

Rev. W. Vickers to Ralph Verney

"Sir,—For your sake the poor Wheelwright shall have all the Care and assistance I am able to help him to. And therefore by the Coach I have sent him a bottle of Liquor whereof he must take half a pint every morning fasting. It will purge him a little, and bring the Tumour to maturation, when it's broke I'll send him plastering, and a diet drink. I suppos it will not be long ere it breaks. The flask is directed to you because I know not how to send it to him. I think I shall come down speedily to Coggershall, and then I will see the man.

Mr. Dolbin this day reported the opinion of the Committee about Dr. Sachls. answer which the Lords sent down to the House, who have agreed by the majority of a hundred, to stand by their Articles. Dr. West preached on Munday last before the House of Commons, who have divided whether he should have thanks or not, and it was carried by 15 that he should, the others say he deserves a rope. The Lottery is not yet full. . . . There hath been a Storme at Court amongst the great ones, but its pretty well over.

P.S. The flask will come on Saturday by the Coach."

The medicine missed the Coach, so difficult was it for the Wheelwright and the flask to be brought together.

Elizabeth Adams to Lord Fermanagh

6 Feb.
1710.

"I cannot let my nephew Lloyd go to your Lordship without returning my thanks for the good nues you sent me of my Nees Lovett's being well againe and the little stranger's name, and I hope it will not be very long before I shall wish you Joy of another little Stranger of another sort. . . . Lady Stamp was with mee last week and told mee her Nees Mary Right was married to one Mr. Offley, a lawyer, neerly related to the Chesther Offleys, that has four thousand a year, and the toun saies there is but one between him and all that Estat, and he has in present 8 hundered a yeare.

My Nees Vickers is just cum in from her brother's; she thinks him in a very ill condision, and eat with the Vapors, and for my part I believe he'll kill himselve with Loddonom which he takes every day; all folts in this leter must be layd on Cus. Vickers, who has made me writ in hast, & now will lett me say now more but that I am your poore old Aunt and humble servt., E. ADAMS."

Rev. W. Vickers to Ralph Verney, at Baddow

3 Feb.
1710.

"... This day Mr. Dolbin carried the Replication, and the Lords have appointed Thursday next for Dr. Sacheverell's Tryal. . . . Its said the Queen hath read over Dr. Sachls. answer. Mr. Rayman and Serjeant Prat, his Counsell, desired to be excused, after they had taken his fees, but they returned his money. Pamphlets for and against Dr. Sachvl. swarme in our Streetes, and some of the young (Ministers) tis believed in their Sermons have been Borrowers."

The Rev. William Vickers was one of the few Whig clergymen, and had no sympathy with the popular enthusiasm for Sacheverell.

Ralph Palmer writes to Ralph Verney, enclosing "The Thanksgiving, Second Part":

Amongst the High Churchmen I find there are sev'rall
That stand by the merit of Henry Sacheveral,
Among the Low Churchmen I find that as odly
Some pin all their faith on one Benjamin Hoadly.
But we moderate men do our judgements suspend
For God only knows where these matters will end ;
Since Salisbury (Burnet) and Kennet (White) shew
That Doctrines may change as Men's principles goe,
And twenty years hence for ought You and I know
It may be Hoadly the High and Sacheveral the Low.

16 Feb.
1710.

16 Dec.
1710.

*Rev. W. Vickers to Ralph Verney, at Baddow
(Posted with one of Lord Fermanagh's first Franks)*

"Sir,—After I had the honour of your visit, I sent for the Inn-keeper, where my horse stood, to pay him for his standing. And accordingly paid him of his swelling with a sharp reproof for his negligence. He said that such things were common to the best of horses for want of Riding, which he was sure was the real cause of mine. Several other horses (he said at this time in his Stables) being in the same condition, affirming moreover that he thought my horse as sound as any other whatever. This I thought Sir to notify to remove your fears; however I know you would be so good a judge in those matters that I should be satisfied with your opinion."

5 Apr.
1712.

Pen Vickers writes to Lord Fermanagh regretting that he has not received his medicine, but her husband has so many patients, it's no great wonder that some are lost. She alludes to the reports about the Bankers:

"I have not bin out of our Parish but once since you left the Town, and that was for my Cos. Palmes's Lodgins in Polland Strt., where he gave my Aunt and Daughter and Captain Lloyd, husband and self, a very handsome Supper. We have noe hopes of Lord Burlington's Debt; my Lady upon a sight of the Bond said she woud pay noe more Debts, having paid full thirty thousand pounds since her Ld. died, nor are we likely to have a farden at the other Tally, so must be content. I have not bin att Westminster since the Great Wedding (Kitty Ogle's). My Bro. is still intraged as much as ever. They cry up their new Brother, and give out to all he is a Gentillman of a good famely. My Husd. called as he went by to see them. Bell told him you ware so kind to say you would be glad to doe him any kindness to prefer him, and that she hoped it woud prove in the End as good a match as mine, for that was but a very indiffarant one at first. . . . Tom Saunders mett the Captain and told him he had brought up an other horse for the Parson if he wanted one."

17 July
1711.

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—You will have by the Carrier Dr. Sachverill's tryall, two Volumes of the Pearage etc. I left Madam and all our Hadnum friends well a Munday morning and was in towne by six. We have a mighty talk tonight that 20 sail of Large French Men-of-Warr are gon for the West Indies to take Jamaica; Tho. Barnard is half mad about it."

17 July
1711.

"The Duke of Newcastle by a fall from his horse broke his Collar Bone and is Dead, as also the Duke of Northumberland of an

apoplexy. In my way to London I met with one of Quainton, whom I find to be one of Judge Dormer's Creatures and no friend of yours. . . . I hear all the Whig Lords will be at the Horse Race which they say will be very great."

Penelope Vickers, from Haddenham, to Lord Fermanagh

8 Sept.
1711.

"I waited for an opportunity of returning you and my Lady thanks for your Last past Favours to myself and Spouse when with you; most pleashuars are short-lived, and soe was my Last with you, but considering your illness it was well the Company broake up, less by the Compliance of ours; it was much better for your health as well as pocket to leave you. . . . My Lord Danvers was intered Privetly att the Abbey, and Lady Mary, his sister was just upon her marriage which was to be quite Priviet."

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

18 Sept.
1711.

"My Lord,—If Mrs. Pen will give me leave towards the latter end of the next week, I intend to make my last tour through Haddenham and then with your leave to spend an hour or two" [at Claydon].

Lord Fermanagh to Rev. W. Vickers

6 Dec.
1711.

"Sir,—At my return out of Berkshire I found your letter with the Newspapers. I had a very bad journey, both for Rain, Bad Wayes, and floods, and at one place the waters were above the waistband of my Breeches, so that I went thorow a Cold Bath, and so to the next Alehouse, where I stript, and by a vast fire in three hours I dried my Skin, Linnen and Woollen, and proceeded on. Over another water of a mile in length and more I went in a High Waggon, yett after all the mischances I took no Cold nor had any paine in the whole day.

This day Sir T. Cave and Capt. Lloyd leave us for London by the Aylesbury Coach. If they are merry with you on the Horse Swapp, leaugh it all off with Em, and shew noe consern for it; that is my advice which I hope you'll follow, and then they'll not Teez you. I believe if you had not been in a Passion you had fared better."

Pen Vickers writes from Hadenham to Lord Fermanagh that her husband

"will never doe anything but what he will be apprised by you, and I am sure I will not doe anything of moment but will consult you as much as any Childe you have. . . . I hear the Smallpox is at your Brother Baker's, one of his sons has it; he and his Lady are

4 Oct.
1711.

gon I am told into Yorkshire, and his Daughters are gon out of the house, being fearfull, as I can't blame them, to put off the Evill Day as long as they can."

4 Nov.
1711.

Lord Fermanagh to Mrs. Vickers

"Madam,—It is soe long since I heard from the successful Doctr. or his deare Penny, that I thought they were both gone to Pegg Granton's, but Mary Lovett and Captain Lloyd come hether last night tell me you had obeiged the Stanfordians with a letter, which rejoiced me much to hear you were still amongst the Living Creaturs, tho' forgotten. Therefore I thought it advisable to put you in mind of your Old Friends, that amongst your many new ones, you may sometimes amongst your Insignificant Thoughts cast one on the Bunkings of Buckinghamshire, who are much the Evill Doctor's and your humble servants."

A letter, partly torn, to Mrs. Vickers, alludes to a victory snatched by the Whigs.

11 Oct.
1711.

"That wicked party were soe pleased at the news of my being dead that at W—— they rung the Bells for joy. They thinke me such a Thorn in their side."

20 Nov.
1711.

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

"We have no other news in town than what the prints afford—the Queen whom they reported dead a Saturday night, blessed be God is very well, and comes to Town this very day."

22 Nov.
1711.

Lord Fermanagh to Rev. W. Vickers

"Sir,—I was more vexed at the receiving yours of the 20th than any letter that you ever writt me, but this . . . not but that all your letters are very pleasing and acceptable to me . . . however you'll save a horse-keeping this winter which will help towards the loss. I thought Guy Palmes had been a Prisoner but I'me glad he is out and come to be your Neighbour, for I think that poor Gentleman is ruined by his own father as most people say. I wish him well and that he may be more lucky hereafter. Pray give my service to Madame Penny. I have not time now to answer her letter but I hope she will forgett the Horse Swapping tho' she remembers the Gentleman."

The joke against Mr. Vickers goes on in the family, because he cannot, as Lord Fermanagh advises, take it good-humouredly. Sir Thomas Cave writes to Lord Fermanagh from London that he and Captain Lloyd

"had a Baiting with the Prince of Darkness out of Sherbourne Lane; he seriously believed the Lame Horse was mine, and I had his company with a great bundle of Evill Cases the other morning [cases of the King's Evil which he was treating], and I puff'd Em, and saddled Em, and Saundered them in lieu of T. C." 2 Dec. 1711.

It was Mr. Saunders' lame horse that had been sold to Mr. Vickers.

Lord Fermanagh to Rev. W. Vickers

9 Dec. 1711.

"Sir,—I received with yours of the 6th the Hanover Memoriall, which will set men's witts at work pro and con. I suppose this day the Leicrs. Knt. with the Flanders keen Capt'n. did themselves the honour of dining in Shurburne Lane, for soe they agreed to doe, when here. I hope this night to hear whether the Parliamt. continue sitting or are further proroged. If the latter twill be late for Wayes and Meanes. Lady F.'s and my lott are come up Blanks. I wish better fortune to your Penny."

A letter from Rev. William Vickers to Lord Fermanagh:

"The Lady Russell hath sent the Westminster Ladyes half a Buck. . . . Lodgins are fitting up for Pr. Eugene, whom we expect every hour. Sir H. Stewkley's Park hath been robbed of severall Deer. Lord James Murray is made Coll. of the Guards, Madame Penne is in good health close to the fire-side. It is extream cold here with abundance of snow. . . . The wind is against our Peace, the Bp. of Bristol cannot saile." 27 Dec. 1711.

It was the year that Prince Eugene came to England, on the Emperor's account, to try and delay the peace with France. He was coldly received by Queen Anne, and found his former chief and colleague, the Duke of Marlborough, in the dark shadow of Royal disapproval. He was too loyal a friend to listen to the courtiers' advice that the great soldier had better be ignored, and dined with the Duke and Duchess on more than one occasion. 1712.

They were apparently living at St. Albans while Blenheim was being built.

At a public dinner which the Duke of Marlborough was giving on Sunday in "a Fine Tent", Mr. Vickers would be quite at liberty to sit down with his wife. Indeed he would have been welcomed as a Whig, a *rara avis* amongst "the Black Guard". It was by no means a unique experience that one of the company should see a hint given by the Duke to his beloved Sarah entirely disregarded. Lord Fermanagh always enjoyed a skirmish of wits with his cousin

Penelope. The service had apparently been held in St. Albans Cathedral.

Mr. Vickers writes:

19 Aug.
1712.

"My Lord,—The inclosed I believe will be a welcome guest to your Honr. and all others who delight not in war. I hope the Nation will speedily reap the fruits of this Long expected peace. On Sunday last I dined at St. Albans, where I saw the D. and Dutchess of Marlborough, and heard His Grace Repremand his Dutchess for setting at prayers, but she obeyed not."

Lord Fermanagh replied:

7 Sept.
1712.

"Madam Penney,—I perceive by yours of the 2nd that the Country agrees soe well with you, that you are become a Rambler to St. Albans Hatfield, which puts me in hopes you'll Squander a few of your idle dayes to see Claydon, and particularly your friends, who have nether a fine Tent to entertain you in, nor a lofty Cathedrall wherein to say your devotions; but we shall give you as hearty a Wellcome as you can have from any German Prince in Europe. Your Frd. A. R. did a 2nd time mention the Tent, that the price was fallen to three pence. If his relation be false, a rope on him.

Pretty Miss is much beholding to you as are all her friends for your kindness to her and your trouble about her. The Couple that I reconciled were Mr. Miller and his Spouse, the Minister of Got-hurst, but I heare that the Friendshipp did not last long. Your husband's sending the forrain and Town News is very pleasant, and I desire you to give him my thanks and service. Mr. Parson that held one of the three livings of Wadsdon is dead, and some think Lord Wharton will give it to the son of Wooburn, and others to the Parson of Wendover. D. of Marlborough hath given Bleaden & Woodstock to Dr. Baker of Wadham College."

Lady Cave writes:

6 Oct.
1712.

"Betty is in Town with my Cousin Vickers, and I heard by last post had the Chicking Pox very full, butt was very well with it, and I hope will soon be over. I don't question my Cousin's care of her butt am sorry she has the trouble of her illness."

7 Oct.
1712.

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—A Munday the Westminster Ladies came and dined with us, and on Thursday the Lady Russell, her Grand-Daughter, waiting woman, Coachman, Black and footman—dined with us also. The late Clamours at Court the Wigs are saying are true. Tories say they are damn Lies only to distract us. Your little

Granddaughter continues very well and my whole family. Mrs. Cotton the Parson's Daughter of Hadinham dined with us today; the Lord Godolphin is not buried, the Lord Bolingbroke is going for France once more. Parson Forbes was drowned the other night going over Guilford Bridge. . . . Mrs. Masham was never out of favour, as had been reported."

"My Lord,—The Evill Doctor was going yesterday into New North Street, Red Lion Square, and observing the mob to run by the Coach in great crowds supposed it was to see the French Ambassador; no sooner did he light out of the Coach but observed a violent fire from whence he ran immediately down to the Lady Askoe's [Ascough?] house (his Acquaintance), the very next door to the Ambassador's, and fetcht the Lady with her Rich Daughter almost out of the flames (the fier having seized the House) and conducted both through the crowds into another House, across the way. The Ambassador made his Escape over the Garden Wall, and all his Company, and that way they got all his goods with little or no Loss; the Vaults have preserved the Wine from any Damage. Mr. Parker dyed just before the fier broak, leaveing behind him a plentiful Estate, a Widow and 4 Children ill of the Smallpox in the House. The Lady Mary Gore was much frightened, but had no loss of Goods, all being Conveyed backwards Like the Ambassador's, who is going to live in the late Duke Hamilton's house. Dr. Biss is to be Bp. of Heriford, and Dr. Oatly is to succeed him. They say the keeping of the Birthday is put off for a month, that the Queen's Musick are ordered to provide Against the General Thanksgiving for a Peace.

27 Jan.
1713.

That the Drawing-room at St. James's is open three days a week, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Leutainnant Generall Compton is made Governor of the Tower. Mr. Charlton tells me tonight he has done your Honr. Justice in the Country about the report. This is all the Quak Doctor pickt. up."

Sir Thomas Cave, with a constant suspicion of humbug, distrusted "the Evill Doctor's" cures, but what was never in doubt was the kindness shown to the children of the family. There was a special occasion, when Lady Cave was slowly recovering from a confinement and her little Penelope developed feverish symptoms, which the doctors pronounced to be probably smallpox, and at the best measles.

Without a thought of the risk in this much-dreaded infection, Penelope Vickers at once took her little namesake home with her, and nursed her tenderly through a long illness; nor was this the only time when the sick children of the family were welcomed in Sherborne Lane.

11 Feb.
1714.

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh, at Baddow

"My Lord,—Today we have the news that the Queen of Spaine is dead, and that the Life of her King is despaired; it's said the Spanish Whigs have poisoned both; our Queen comes to town a Thursday next. Colonel Lloyd for a few days is gon to visit the Widdow Gery.

The Bp. of S. [Burnet] must be frightened out of his Witts with the approach of Popery, as he told the people in his Sermon in Clerkenwell Church a Wednesday last.—I had rather be Bp. of Claydon or Baddow than succeed his Lordship. Captain Chapman was at Court the Queen's Birthday, as fine as a prince, the Buckingham royal commission a Saturday. Her Majesty God be praised is wonderfull well in health, tho' the Whigs won't believe a word of it."

6 Jan.
1715.

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—Here's a house of old and young maids . . . and we have drunck your honour's health, long life, and happiness, and now are turning about the punchbowle; the young Lady your Aunt hath beaten them all round at Cards, and plays her part dextrously with all other games from hand to mouth. About 5 in the morning I guess the young Lady will dismiss the Company."

Jan.
1715.

Lord Fermanagh to Mrs. Vickers

" . . . This being a birthday I hope you'll lay mourning aside and will apeare very glorious at Westminster, where I wish you may have the good fortune to winn at Play as much as the Dr. gets by toying in his Suffolk Journey, and then you may bid adieu to Carding till Easter. Damn the Lotterys for they are not lucky to your humble servant,

FERMANAGH."

30 Apr.
1715.

Rev. and Mrs. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—If you dissolve an Ounce of Cream of Tarter in a porringer of thin warm water grull, and drank it in the morning fasting, it might do you service. And if you would goe to the Bath this Spring and drink those Waters, I believe you would not repent the journey.

A Friday last was the D. of Ormond's birthday, who dined at the Devil-Taverne attended with many of the Nobility, Bishops, Clergy and Gentry, the Whigs say it was to plot against the Government. I am gon to Winsor soe must leave Misss. Penne to finish, only tell you that Aunt's Cordyall is all exhausted, whose experience of your generosity makes her hope for a double portion the next Returne to the Golden Bottle. She is to pay me on

Quarter Day for a Bottle of French Wine, I treated her with on Thursday last, 15d. is my security, pray reminde her that she be honest. . . . I have got Dr. Ratclif's Booke, by Cosen Ruth Lloyd to carry to Mr. Smith's to send to you next week, be pleased to send againe being borrowed."

The county of Bucks was at that time in the diocese of Lincoln. The Bishop was William Wake, who in 1716 succeeded Tenison as Archbishop of Canterbury.

Frank Luttrell, at Chelsea, to Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon

25 Feb.
1716.

"My Lord. . . . It would add greatly to the pleasure which I take in reading a Messenger from you if I could hear, that with the Gay Serene weather you was restored to A Freedom from Pain, if not to a firm Habit of Body, which last I had much rather congratulate you upon, if it please God so to order it.

I cannot say that my Mother hath yet received much benefit by the weather for her fits of coughing are still very hard and strong upon her both day and night; Nor is my Father so well as I could wish him for his left leg is swelled about the ancle, he hath consulted Dr. Sloane by whose advice he now is taking a bitter Drink, which doth him but little Service; This is the present condition of your friends on this side of the way; As to those, on the other side of the way [the Palmers], I cannot but own with that Share of Sence and discretion in which they about, they have been able to furnish themselves with Arguments of Consolation under their late affliction; my poor Sweetheart Mrs. Jane White and my niece Alice sink under the weight of their calamity a little deeper than the rest, on which Score I cannot but pity them. On Sunday 5th. instant, our neighbour was interr'd at Chelsea Church; the Corpse in an Hearse and two horses without Scutcheons, Sir Tho. Dunck alone in a mourning Coach and two, Mr. Palmer and his Lady, Mrs. Alice and Mrs. Challoner in another Coach and two, with a man on each side of the Hearse and the two Coaches with a Common Link in his hand, sett forward from the old Gentleman's late dwelling house at ten at night; the Body was borne upon men's shoulders to its stand in our Church and the ends of the Pall thrown up over it, for want of Gentlemen to bear it up. After service was performed according to the Rubrick he was laid down in the grave upon Dr. Hamey in our middle Isle where he is at peace. He hath left a very good name behind him among all people with whom he had any Dealings. On the Sunday after I observed their own pew to be hung in mourning and the Pulpit and the Reading Desk and that of the Clerk was also, with a border of Scotcheons; our Dr. took down the mourning of Sir William Courtney's mother

before it was hung up its due period, to make way for Mr. Palmer's, from whence they conclude what a degree of Esteem and Friendship he had from our neighbour."

17 Apr.
1716.

Lord Fermanagh to Mrs. Vickers

"Dear Cousin,—I am very sorry your Husbd. is so ill and weak, as you mention. I could not have imagined it and I wish Richmond Aire may recover him. I am glad he hath his servant Bungey with him, God grant him his health. . . . My Old Acquaintances drop off apace, Mr. Hawkener was an understanding man, but for his humour you say right."

28 Apr.
1716.

Sir Thomas Cave, in London, to Lord Fermanagh, at Claydon

"My Lord,—I should not have so soon interrupted your quiet, in the country, but thro' the Request of poor Mrs. Vickers, from whom I am just come, and cannot write thro' grief and bad Eyes, what she wish't me to transmitt you this account of her Husband, who I think looks miserably and languishing, being so weak that he cannot move a joint or Speak; he has been prevailed with at last to take the Bark, though I despair of its good effects. . . . I advised him to the Infusion in Water, for his case was mine about 2 years ago, and I found benefit in the Change of Methodd."

Mr. Vickers recovered wonderfully from his illness in the spring, owing perhaps to the Quinine Bark he so much disliked; he writes to Lord Fermanagh in July that he had seen Aunt Adams, who looks very ill and melancholy.

19 July
1716.

" . . . I have had two fitts of my ague this week, for which reson I am going to Bark—but not to Bite."

24 July
1716.

" . . . Today was a mighty mobb in Salisbury Park who pulled downe the Whig Mug House, severall are killed, and the Foot Guards shamefully beaten."

16 Aug.
1716.

" . . . This day I had the honour to see Mr. Verney at my house, who looks better than ever I knew him, at night I waited on his Lady, who is fat and well likeing; Master Verney is the finest boy that ever was known"—afterwards distinguished as the Honourable John.

In the last winter of Lord Fermanagh's life he seems to have exceeded his usual Christmas presents, though the Evil Doctor shows some undue impatience.

1 Jan.
1717.

"My Lord,—The Good is where the long Bagges lye, poverty you know makes clean Sheetes. We can't come up to your Country

Faire plumb porrage, but must be content with unions and Garlick."

It was well that the old Churchman, who had sacrificed so much for her cause, should have presented a new Bible and Prayer Book to the church, where his gaunt figure was so long known in reading out the Lessons.

The Doctor would have been better for showing a little patience, for the New Year had scarce begun when he has to acknowledge most ample Christmas supplies.

"... We shall take down the front of our house (the door too little) to let in your Sparrow. Ruth Lloyd was here to-day extream ill—you had best send Dr. Rowlands to administer to this Wittie Lady Lest we lose her. The people at Brill send me to-day a patient, whom I shall cure a Sunday. Old Mrs. Saunders of Hatton Garden is here to-night at Pam and Jaw-work . . . all my Country Patients have remembered the Doctor this Christmas, but the Lovetts.

3 Jan.
1717.

When you have read this thing send me some news, I know none in these parts. Abell was last night at Pemberton burying a cartload of the Westminster Abbey tomb stones."

"My Lord,—Your Walleth of Good Cheer came so late a Saturday night we had not time to return you thanks. The Capons were very good but the Venison, Brawn, Turkey, Haires and Wildfowl were much better, so that this year you have outdon all that went before.

8 Jan.
1717.

Your young Aunt stayed till two in the morning, and was wonderfull pleased with her Nephew's Generosity. Ruth Lloyd with your Good Cheer is much better. Madame a Sunday morning coming from Church Sprain'd her Foot, and had much adoe to keep up with the Company. She's abed all this day, and I hope something easier."

"My Lord,—Wee have been this day to Dine with your Westminster Kin, which cost us five shillings in Coach Hier besides a Dozr. [Douceur] to their Abigale, the Play hardly worth the Candle. . . . The King is hourly expected . . . your Venison this year did not stain the pamphletts."

10 Jan.
1717.

Richard Cox to Lord Fermanagh

24 Jan.
1717.

"... I return your Lordship my most humble thanks for your kindness . . . all my Endeavours have proved ineffectual to succeed my Father in his place, it has ben my misfortune to have a very ungenerous Person to deale with, for tho' I offered Serjant A Hun-

dred and Twenty Guineas for it, he refused it notwithstanding it is a very considerable deale more than it is worth. . . . my father has left nothing behinde him and having brought me up to no Manner of Imployment it would have been to my advantage, which the Serjant is sensible of & therefore hath dealt so unfairly by, my Lord, your Lordship's most humble servant,
 RICHD. COX."

8 Feb.
 1717.

Mrs. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

"My Lord,—My husband being out of town I take my turn of scribbling to you. Yesterday I went to Waite on your Daughter Lovett who was gon to Chelsea but returned by five and stayed till neare ten before we parted. I think my Aunt much oltard since I see her, and turns black severall times as if she ware like to Sound [swoon]. Wee played at cards but I cannot say with any delight, she seemed to dooze as I thought. . . . Its said Lord Wharton's Lady sent for Leave to come home to him, tho' she never had the small pox, he send her word she might, and that he hoped she would catch them and dye, for that hee wanted to be ridd of her. She keeps a Coach with a coronet and his Armes, but her father's horses, and she also has a woman Chambermade, and footman, and her Lord is forst to allow her £500 a yeare. . . . I heare last Monday night that the Lady Dowager Wharton dyed att Willims' the Apothecary's, shure my Lord's illness and hers has bin as beneficiall to that Whiggish Plan, as an Election. Its not known yet in towne whether my Lady has left any will, if not it will make it ill for her two daughters. . . . My Sarvice to Cousen Lloyd, I wish you joy of the Edestons being sold for tis whot I thinke you Disiard."

21 Feb.
 1717.

Lord Fermanagh to Mrs. Vickers

". . . There's one Mr. Waldo hath lately got a living in these parts. He comes from Harrow-on-the-Hill, and is a topping parson, and keeps his Coach and foure horses."

28 Feb.
 1717.

Lord Fermanagh to Rev. W. Vickers

"I am glad you are returned well from that Agueish County of Kent, and that at your return you found all the Ladies at the Corner House brisk. I sopose their Wash is beech oyle to make Em fair. If Will. St. leave you a legacy you are lucky, for Doctors gett by the living but never come near people after life; yet I believe his Benevolence will come to us both at the same time, to you for Kindred and to me for old acquaintance. I wont hinder you from going to Child's or Batson's, where you may learn some news to send to your humble servant,
 FERMANAGH."

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

5 Mar.
1717.

"My Lord,—The Dr. is so weak you may knock him down with a feather. For that Reason you have no Lettr. the last post, if he should come to Claydon your Lady would sett the great doggs at him, or dipp him in the horsepond; or if he should take the Corner House the next remove would be to the Stone house Ludgate St., and then your Honr. would have the charge of fetching him out; your innate goddness disposing you every year to such acts of Charrity. Guy P. was here a Saturday with a Gentleman Usher attending him at our door.

You won't suffer a Parson to come into the Commission of Peace, much more into the House of Commons. The 500 Stock in Nag Head Court may be better spared for your Bookseller than in the South sea. . . . If the Dr. buys a principallity you will do a well to recommend your Chaplaine for his Bishop."

"My Lord,—I had the strong inclination to return to Claydon, but the wayes through your Country ware soe badd I did not dare to venture. Mrs. Lovett I Find expected I shall have visited her daghter my patient. Tho' She never mentioned one word to me of that matter, nor did I know one step of the way from your House to Stanford. I am heartily desirous to do the Child all the Good I am able, and should not value the expense and Length of the Journey provided people would but speake. I am obliged to you for all your Civillitys, and hope I may still deserve your favour."

2 Apr.
1717.

Sir Thomas Cave, from London, to Lord Fermanagh

16 Mar.
1717.

"The Condition I left you in certainly required some more speedy inquiry of its continuance or amendment. I hope the Doctor has mistaken your distemper. . . . We expect to proceed on the reducing the Intrest of Publick Funds Tuesday or Wednesday next, which makes many in the Suburbs as horn madd as a City Alderman, we much want your Company, to give a list of Commissrs. or Directions to your Bror. Drke, what number of your good Friends and Allyes, the Whiggs, do desire to be added; a line of your Recovery would be acceptable."

Betty Verney writes a spiteful letter during her father's illness, which he did not suspect of being his last. Unlike her sisters, who were as much devoted to Lady Fermanagh as if she had been their own mother, Betty had always taken up an attitude of opposition. Possibly, as the eldest daughter, she felt that but for her stepmother's presence she would have been mistress in her father's house.

26 Mar.
1717.

Betty Verney to the Hon. Ralph Verney

"Dear Brother,—Since you had the account of my father's indisposition he is much amended, but has not quite finished Doctor Traplons prescriptions, which have been very successful in removing the pain in his side, but his Cough and spitting is the same as when you saw him, and I believe must Continue so till the humour turns another way, her Ladyship has Consulted both the Physicians, being blooded, blistered, Vomited and Purged, and yet is out of order and Complaining. I'm apt to think they don't fitt her Distemper, but make the old Proverb good. Her two nieces are still here, to his Honour's great dissatisfaction, which he has discovered in their hearing, but she says they shall goe never the sooner for his being rude to Em, she'll keep Em for her own pleasure, soe he makes himself their scorn to noe purpose, which I cannot but be very sorry for; he's soe led away by her, that nobody else dares tell him anything to his own advantage. . . . Mrs. Jorden is gone to her new habitation and is very much missed here, I am sure by me, who am obliged to attend in her room; his Honour don't like the new one nor did I ever think he would. I am summoned to write a letter for him, if its to you I'll enclose this in it, with Respectfull Salutes to all your family, from, Dear Brother, yours, and my Sister's, affectionately and sincerely, E. V."

31 Mar.
1717.

Lord Fermanagh to Ralph Verney

"Deare Ralph,—I send you a note of repaires for Landsdon's house, I think you come off well, for I had this year a Tenant that hath carried away seven Dores and a Windowe from a house of mine, besides slates etc., so that my House is Guttred. Another of my Tenants is broke and owes me two years rent but hath no money, he having paid off others with my rent. Harry King oweth me £180, but I have seazed his cattle and secured a House he hath at Winslow, and so he goes on, but how I shall gett the groweing rent (which is £83 per annm.) I know not, These matters will let you see the hardships I lie under.

Some Whiggs of Amersham sent to Ham—n. that I was dead, and that he should send downe one Tarrant [?] an Officer to supply my place, so you see their love and forwardness. I have shaken off my Ague I think, but I recover but very slowly, and do still keep my Chamber and am watcht with a nights."

Lord Fermanagh was doing his best in these last weeks to attend the House of Commons, but he was very much hindered by his health. William Vickers writes him a jesting letter, wishing to

cheer his old friend. It is addressed within an inner cover "For the Lord Trembler".

"I am sorry Jack Ague hath catch you by the heels, you must Bark at him Lustily and then he will leave you, and wash down that portion with a Glass of Chalys. Its said the Loan of £60,000 is full att 4 per cent so greedy are you Rich Men, play at small game Rather than Nothing. I am deafe today with the noise of the Young Ladies. Its said the King hath forgiven that Preist Howell the whipping which as this day (some say) is a singular favour, which is owing to the goodness of the Bishop of London in begging for him.

5 Mar.
1717.

All the Ladies here greet you and wish you a speedy deliverance from your Quakerism, and so doth your most obliged and humble servt. to command,

W. VICKERS."

Jack Baker to Lord Fermanagh

5 Mar.
1717.

". . . Here is a great talk of considerable alterations at Court, and some say that Mr. Walpole, Mr. Hanmer, Mr. Boscawen, Lord Townsends, Lord Orford [?] and several others are out."

Daniel Baker to Lord Fermanagh

16 Mar.
1717.

". . . I and my wife and Daur. and a maid all are in towne, we came upon a sodden upon my son's account, who indeed was much out of order. Wee hope Dr. Mead has found out his distemper, if he had not come up as he did he would have had a Feaver or convulsions, he is so fell away one hardly would know him but youth and the Spring I trust will be of use to him. The Draper I thank God is mighty well. . . . I Lodge at one Mr. Gyles, a Book-seller in Holborn."

". . . The King was at the House yesterday to pass the Land Tax Bill, Tis said my Lord Townsend is out, & Mr. Walpole, my Lord Orford, Mr. Methuen and Mr. Pultney—and others are to follow. I wish our divisions and heatts dont do any mischief, & make us little both at home and abroad, Our services to the Lordship."

11 Apr.
1717.

Lord Fermanagh's departure from Claydon was accelerated by an urgent official message from London.

"Sir,—In obedience to the Letter from the Honourable the Speaker of the House of Commons of the 11th. instant, I am to acquaint you that you are required to attend your service in Parliament on Thursday the second day of May next. The House of Commons intending to proceed with all Severytyes against

15 Apr.
1717.

such of their Members as shall then neglect to attend the Service of the House and whose excuses shall not be allowed."

Addressed to "The Honourable the Lord Viscount Fermanagh, one of the Burgesses in Parliament for the Borough of Agmondisham, Bucks."

Sir Justus Beck, Bart., addressed to "The Honourable John, Lord Viscount Fermanagh, Sick feared neere Death", and on the other side, "This was sent to the Post office not knowing how to direct to you". The letter is docketed in Lord Fermanagh's own hand, who was perhaps rather amused at this superscription.

The writer was "Designing to stand for Director of the Bank of England", and desired Lord Fermanagh's vote and interest before a list enclosed of twenty-four names to be voted for "at an Election on the Twelfth of this Instant April".

Francis Luttrell writes to Lord Fermanagh, to announce Lady Fermanagh's arrival at Mr. Luttrell's house in Chelsea:

"... She got safe & well hither & in good time & seems to enjoy a pretty good State & to be tolerably easy under the meanness of her accomodation. However, this necessary Ingredient she shal certainly find, an hearty welcome, tho' I pity her unhappy case, in loseing the Entertainmt. of your Ldship's Conversation, to take up with that which falls so many degrees lower in value. I must entreat your Ldship frequently to visit her with Letters, as the only means left to support her, till She hath a personal Interview with your Self, & if they come hither, I hope She will be so kind as to communicate to this Family all those parts of their Contents which are proper to be divulged, that we also may share in the Benefit as well as the diversion of them. Now I have this Opportunity, I humbly thank your Lordship for thinking my Name worth mentioning in a Letter lately conveyed hither, for it looks as if I had the Honour of being sometimes in your thoughts, but then the Company I am joined do sufficiently evince that you have an Esteem for the little Man; under all these Tokens of Favour how can I contain my Selfe within due Bounds, So as not to begin to value my self a little in being So far regarded by a Man of your Lordship's consummate Character, who can be said to have Suffered no other Stain or Blemish in his Reputation & Judgment then in this Single Article of Advancing my Credit. But the Lady you are pleased to favour with your Advice hath conformed her Self to the Purport of it ever Since She came under this roof, so that whatever Occasions her Kinsman might wish for to gratifie himself, he is forct to watch for them & take them as it were by Surprize, but her Sister hath not much cause to thank your Lord-

ship unless you will change her doom & provide better for her. I have particular Duties & Services to tender to your Lordship as from the Lady, from Mrs. Porter & the two Spinsters, besides many humble acknowledgmts. from my Father & Mother; How happy would the unworthiest of your Lordship's servants be, if his humble Duty and Service might be admitted to crowd it Self into this Company, for no one had ever more cause to reverence you, than your Lordship's very humble servt.,
F. L."

Lord F. to Ralph Verney

23 Apr.
1717.

"Dear Ralph,—I recd. your Letters of the 3 and 17. Mr. Bertie is a lucky man in Marrying himself and matching his Daughter; you are wellcome from New Market whence I suppose you came loaden with plates and prizes; I expect Mr. Vickers here this morning; our Ladys sett out this week for Pen, and so for Chelsea. My service to all your good family, so I remain, Your loveing Father,
FERMANAGH."

Rev. W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh

25 Mar.
1717.

"... We were in hopes to have heard of your Recovery quicker than it appeares. But now you have the advice and prescriptions of the Learned Doctor Frampton we expect a better account of your success. . . . Sir George Bing sailed yesterday a Morning, and I was told a Sunday in Kent, your judge could not read his charge at Maidstone Assizes, however he hanged three shouldiers but no parsons. Mistress Penne is much troubled for you, praying every Day for your health and so doth your Humble servant."

"My Lord,—Claydon is one of the best stages I keep, 20 or 30 Guineys is the Least I gett in an afternoon, my Packetts are so well approved, a welthy gentleman at that place treat me nobley, with fidlers faire, and when I lave the town palms me with 10 or 13 Guineys, you need not wounder I visitt Claydon soe often.

2 Apr.
1717.

The South Sea Company treat the Prince today with a Dinner, and waite on him down to Limus [Limehouse] to see one of their 90 Hundred Tun Launched. The Prince tonight in his return from Limus drove like Jehu through the city, and his own shaze overturned an hackney coach at Fleet Ditch.

I hear you are coming Post to London. I wish you a good Journey. When you write next pray lett us know how the people doe at the Corner House—The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

I must in a short time visit Hanbrough near Woodstock, pray be sicke when I come into those parts that I may once more gett

some of your Rino. The short Major with his Lady are coming over and call at Claydon on the way to bespeak a Godfather."

How little Mr. Vickers foresaw that the voice that always welcomed him and Madam Penny so cordially to Claydon was so soon to be silent. His persistent letters continued, though he did not long survive his old friend; but Penelope had many years still to live through alone.

Her affection for her husband was very practically expressed in her Will, bearing date the 23rd January 1732. Ralph, then Lord Fermanagh, but bearing the name of Earl Verney at the time of her death, was the sole executor. Penelope's object was to keep her husband's name alive in his native place by founding a Vickers Charity, "towards putting out apprentices to some honest trade or employment, such of the poor children belonging to the Parish of Davenham, near Nantwich in the County of Chester, where her husband's father was born".

Mr. Arthur Bryant, who is editing the Shakerley letters, informs us that "Davenham is not near Nantwich but near Middlewich, overlooking the Dane valley. Till 1788 it belonged to the Holfords, distant kinsmen of my wife's, who lived in an ancient timber and plaster house on the banks of the river, since destroyed." Lord Verney appointed a committee to be responsible to him for spending the £200 according to the testator's directions. The Rector of Davenham, Rev. T. Derbeyshire, the Squire of the house on the river, Alex. Holford, and Thomas Ravenscroft constituted the committee. Of course, there are discussions in the parish how the money can be spent to relieve the Poor Rate rather than to educate the children. On Lord Verney's request the Rector sends him a list of children who might be eligible for apprenticeships; the Cheshire cottage names—such as Peter Kettel, James Pickstock, Martha Oaks, and Ralph Foxley—differing widely from those at Claydon.

The Rector adds that if Lord Verney should think fit to spend the capital in apprenticeships, "it would be a great kindness to the person who has undertaken to maintain the Poor, seven years at a Certain Price, and a little or no advantage to the Parish in general, who are obliged to pay the same rate to the Undertaker (tho' this number be taken off his hands) till such time as in all probability they would be able to maintain themselves. It would be better, in my Opinion, to pay for instructing children in Reading,

Writing and Accompts, with the Interest, and this would be a meanes to perpetuate the Donation; but I speak with Defference to better judgement and am, Sir, your very humble servant,

THO. DERBISHIRE."

"The Rector regrets that Earl Verney should have so much trouble in this matter, but the farmers in the parish will not agree to the scheme proposed for education." The Rector adds: "I took particular Care to insert the name of every poor child, not only those that are at present supported by the Undertaker of the Workhouse, but also those that are maintained by the Industry of their Parents, who would be under the necessity of going into the Workhouse, if at any time their Fathers be deprived of the means of acquiring a competency for their subsistence". The Rector is still inclined for the school plan, in order that such a generous benefaction may be perpetuated; which would certainly have been the object of the testatrix.

30 May
1744.

That there were boys ready to profit by the apprenticeship Charity is proved by a list signed by the Churchwarden of two boys apprenticed to weavers and one to a twine-spinner.

The wiser counsels evidently prevailed, as Canon the Rev. G. R. Sanders kindly informs us that a Penelope Vickers Charity still exists, which is used for the apprenticing of boys born and living in the ancient parish of Davenham. So that Penelope Vickers' kind intentions have been carried out.

